

**An Outsider's  
Guide to Antifa,  
Volume Two:  
Politics, Philosophy & History**

**By  
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# Dedication

To my father, Thomas Knouff, whose attempts to teach me certain values and principles were never fully understood until after his death. Thank you for teaching me the value of hard work, yet also warning me against working too much. Thank you for teaching me to fundamentally distrust authority, while also accepting people for their actions and demonstrated values, not on the basis of race, ethnicity, beliefs, etc.

To my mother, Irene Knouff, who chose to help support my projects instead of cutting me out of her life for our differences of opinion in the 2016 Presidential vote. Thank you (and of course, dad) for making education a priority in my early life. Perhaps I don't recall all of the details of places I was taken, or books that I read or were read to me, but the value of education was instilled in me nonetheless.

To my wife, Megan Knouff, who doesn't always fully understand what I do, or why I do what I do, but supports me nonetheless. Never take my social oddities or detachment as lack of love. Now that I've written two books and created a third book with a series of edited articles, it is time for you to actualize your potential. I love you.

To the many supporters, whether it is just sharing posts or even support as simple as considering my arguments (even if are counter to your beliefs), or actual monetary support. I do this for you, the people, to facilitate community action for the benefit of the people's freedom, liberty, and prosperity.

# Introduction

Volume One was my first attempt at writing and publishing a full-length book. Not only that, but I undertook the responsibility with multiple years removed from graduate school and regular professional writing. Also, given the inherent difficulties in condensing the immense scope of the subject into easily-digestible segments, this series will continue to be a work-in-progress for the immediate years to come. It is important to remember the anti-fascist movement is a complex social phenomenon, with numerous influencing factors both inside and outside of the group, as well as varying opinions within the movement itself.

No matter how many pages are written, something of importance will likely be omitted. Suggestions for topics and corrections are welcomed from the audience, and I promise to make a good faith effort to make corrections in a timely manner and to take into consideration any suggestion for additions to the series.

This book series serves multiple purposes. It is designed to be an encyclopedia-style reference for researchers. It is also designed to act as a historical document for subsequent generations and to facilitate understanding of the anti-fascist movement for those who are aligned as necessarily being the opposition as a result of an inadequate left-right political paradigm. My own analyses and opinions are infused into the text in such a way where it is rather easy to discriminate between objective facts, statements from members of the anti-fascist movement and other sources, and my own potentially biased worldview.

I hope this book series proves to be a useful resource that tells the story of a grossly misunderstood social movement, full of both superficial diversities of appearance and classification as well as diversity of thought, while maintaining historical accuracy. It is quite an easy task to discover books from the perspective of an insider to the anti-fascist movement. It is almost as easy to find a book from its opposition. Very few books from a balanced perspective exist, and hopefully this book series fills that niche.





# Chapter I: Politics on a Spectrum

## Introduction

In modern-day political discourse, differing points-of-view are typically classified as being either “left-wing” or “right-wing”, with those acknowledging potential benefits of either point-of-view while failing to take a firm stance as being “centrist”. In American politics, the Democratic Party is perceived as being left-wing, the Republican Party as right-wing, and independents as being centrist. Individuals and groups whose opinions deviate significantly from either mainstream political party are often maligned as extremists, conspiracy theorists, bigots, or in cases where the alternative platform is accurately-labeled, the label itself is weaponized against the individual or group with the deviant opinion (i.e. anarchist).

The popular culture, mainstream media dichotomous political spectrum is of little value in most political discussions, given the majority of complex social problems have more than two solutions, and often the solutions within the total set of all potential solutions fail to map neatly to the uniaxial spectrum. Where exactly does a socialist who believes in socialized medicine and other social programs, yet also believes in adequate border security and safeguards to prevent abuse of social programs reside on the uniaxial spectrum? What about someone who believes in a woman’s right to choose regarding abortion, yet believes the federal government should not provide any funding for these services? What about someone who believes in ending the war on drugs, yet believes the police should have a “tough on crime” stance regarding crimes with a clearly-defined victim, such as rape, murder, child molestation, and burglary? Are these individuals simply confused or inadequately educated, given the lack of strict adherence to one end of the political spectrum, or does the political spectrum fail to encapsulate the full spectrum of political ideas in a meaningful way?

The entire set of variables influencing a social problem can frequently be reduced to a more manageable set of only the most influential, meaningful variables. Given the example of the morality crimes abolitionist who is “tough on crime”, a univariate political spectrum defined by the variable of “degree of government intervention” may be of use, where an anarchist who believes the state should not exist, let alone have a monopoly on the utilization of violence and force, resides on one end of the spectrum, while a full-blown authoritarian would reside

on the other. The pro-choice individual who believes the state should abstain from involvement in payments for service would map quite well to this spectrum, at least on this specific issue. An issue emerges when a second, third, and further issues are added: it is quite rare that the average citizen will have a unifying bridge principle that will ensure each-and-every issue maps well to this spectrum -- perhaps for a strict authoritarian or anarchist but not most individuals.

Traditional political spectra fail to adequately explain fascism and authoritarianism. Either fascism or authoritarianism can exist in a plethora of mainstream political frameworks, including social democracy, conservatism, and progressivism. A political spectrum that clearly-delineates fascism and authoritarianism may be useful for identifying the early stages of sociopolitical shifts towards either framework, and as such, proactive measures could potentially be taken to address the problematic shift.

In this chapter, we will explore a variety of political spectra, explaining both fascism and its opposition within the confines of each spectrum. Then, we will discuss potential novel ways to categorize political belief, ideally in a way to promote constructive political discourse and action.

## **Critique of the Standard Left-Right Spectrum**

The standard left-right political spectrum traces its history back to the French Revolution. During the era of the French Revolution, pro-monarchy officials sat on the right side of the National Assembly, while the Jacobins and others demanding a constitutional democracy sat on the left. Over the following 120 years, the autocratic monarchies of the Western world were gradually replaced by other systems of governance, with the majority shifting to parliamentary democracies. A pro-monarchist position, which would have been considered mainstream right-wing in the late eighteenth century, would likely be considered extreme if expressed in 2018. The left-right paradigm shifted to encompass liberals and progressives on the left-wing and conservatives on the right-wing. Communists, state socialists, anarchists, syndicalists reside on the extreme left-wing, while the Green Party, European-style socialists, and certain varieties of populists (i.e. Bernie Sanders) are somewhere in between the extreme-left and more centrist ideologies. Religious fundamentalists advocating for theocracy, fascists, authoritarian monarchists, and military dictatorships reside on the extreme right-wing.

This model has been utilized to malign political dissidents. In the early-to-mid twentieth century – arguably continuing to present-day –

communists, socialists, trade unionists, syndicalists, anarchists, and others who were willing to engage in militant tactics to achieve social change were maligned as being extremists on the left. During the rise of fascism in the early 1920s through mid-1930s, fascists were labeled as extremists on the right-wing. Given fascists and communists were modeled as being polar opposites, it follows that communists should become allies with social democrats and conservatives in conflict against the fascists. However, Ernst Thälmann and others disagreed, stating the difference between the NSDAP and social democrats, which he referred to as “social fascists”, was minimal. As the Axis Powers were defeated, the communists and others on the far-left were once again maligned as the enemy.

Gary Allen (1972) and other historians have critiqued this political spectrum on the basis of non-inclusiveness: both ends of the spectrum involve authoritarian state socialism, with the far-left including international socialism and the far-right including national socialism. Where exactly does anarchism, libertarian socialism, libertarianism associated with Austrian economics, or even limited government constitutionalism reside on this spectrum? It would appear the centrist position would be that of Fabian socialism. What exactly does fiscal conservatism or the platform of constitutionalist Republicans have to do with national socialism? Or social progressivism with Marxist-Leninism? It fundamentally devalues alternative societal constructions not involving an omnipotent central authority. The political ideologies most threatening to federalism and globalism are omitted – perhaps purposefully.

Consider how often the mainstream media in the United States, United Kingdom, or many other nations discuss the political perspective of libertarians or anarchist. How often is the portrayal positive? Accurate? During the 2016 United States presidential election campaign season, where the two candidates of the mainstream political parties were the most disliked candidates in recent memory, Gary Johnson of the Libertarian Party was portrayed as being slow-to-react and somewhat disheveled (likely as a result of not receiving the makeup assistance of the other candidates). Gary Johnson supported immigration reform of the “open borders” variety, the Paris Climate Accord and investment in renewable energy sources and held a plethora of positions more in-line with either progressivism or mainstream Republican Party conservatism than pure libertarianism. Despite campaigning as the pro-civil liberties, pro-marijuana legalization, and less harmful regulations on small businesses candidate, the questions asked to him involved foreign policy, specific military strategies, and preferable outcomes. The video feed delay, former Governor Johnson’s characteristic laid-back attitude, and lack of

specific knowledge of foreign militarism probably turned off many potential voters, even though his lack of adherence to libertarianism turned away many libertarian voters anyway. He was mocked and discarded as irrelevant in a similar fashion as was Dr. Ron Paul, Ralph Nader, Ross Perot, and Lyndon LaRouche – four candidates who only share two issues in common: civil liberties and anti-unnecessary warfare.

This political spectrum also places a vast range of relatively unrelated political ideologies in shared wings of the spectrum. The right-wing somehow encompasses Ron Paul, Pat Buchanan, Adolf Hitler, Margaret Thatcher, George H.W. & George W. Bush, Benito Mussolini, General Pinochet, Saddam Hussein, the Saudi autocracy, and al-Gadaffi. What is the one issue that unifies this group? Also, is “Ron Paul” less “right-wing” than General Pinochet? We can engage in a similar exercise, albeit less pronounced, on the left-wing of the spectrum. Is Ralph Nader more communist, or more centrist, than Hillary Clinton? It’s apparently a solid framework for social division and potential civil war but a failure as an explanatory model.

Perhaps this model is useful for separating reactionaries from revolutionaries? Reactionaries, by definition, desire a return to a previous system, typically rooted in nationalism or theocracy. Reactionaries frequently utilize the rhetoric of revolutionaries to amass a support base and may even nationalize industries or the entire economy. Revolutionaries, by definition, desire a new system of governance, typically one where the general populace has a greater degree of involvement in political decision-making. This does not necessarily mean the end-result is a democratic system of governance, though. Using these definitions to classify specific political movements also fails in many respects, albeit perhaps in such a way to demonstrate potential alternative models of greater usefulness.

The standard political spectrum benefits corporate media outlets, given that complex social issues can be explained in overly simplistic dichotomies: “Pro-Choice” versus “Pro-Life”, “Pro-immigration” versus “Anti-immigration”, “Pro-legalization” versus “Anti-legalization” of marijuana, etc. Given any of these specific social issues, are the possible points-of-view, as well as the total set of derivable solutions, not significantly more complex than a binary logic tree? Ask ten people whether they are “Pro-Choice” or “Pro-Life”, and the results are likely to align neatly into a dichotomous framework. Ask a more meaningful question, such as “What is your opinion of abortion?”, and the results are likely to be significantly more complex, spanning a spectrum of answers from pro-choice to pro-life absolutism, with answers residing on the same general location of this spectrum that significantly differ qualitatively.

## **Circular Modification**

Given the similarities of degree of government control over state and economic issues, use of militarism in the rise of power, strict adherence to a specific ideology, and other similarities between state socialists and other statists of the revolutionary left and the reactionary right, perhaps a slight modification to this model will “fix” it?

This has been discussed by many scholars, albeit for brevity’s sake we will ignore specific models and provide a simple overview. Basically, instead of having a line, the spectrum is turned into a curve that almost closes into a circle. The far-left and far-right almost touch to create a circle, providing a pictorial representation of each being similar. Basically, the authoritarian left and authoritarian right are different sides of the same authoritarian coin. Perhaps a more accurate model for authoritarian ideologies, it still fails to account for libertarian and anarchist ideologies. Changing the shape of a broken model seemingly does not create a “fixed” model.

## **Two-Dimensional Political Spectrum**

If one dimensional models fail to account for other important variables, does increasing dimensionality to two dimensions increase the usefulness of the model? We will explore two-dimensional spectrums in this section, focusing on the most commonly used example, where one axis maps social freedom and the other economic freedom.

Given the social and economic freedom two-dimensional spectrum, the following quadrants emerge:

1. Low social freedom, low economic freedom: authoritarianism
2. High social freedom, low economic freedom: progressivism
3. Low social freedom, high economic freedom: conservatism
4. High social freedom, high economic freedom: libertarianism

Some individuals commonly complain about the government being too involved in social issues (i.e. sexuality, religion, abortion) or economic affairs (i.e. excessive taxation and regulation, licensing, certain goods and services being deemed illegal in the marketplace). Others complain about the lack of government intervention in solving social problems (i.e. health care, education, homelessness). Let’s assume the x-axis signifies economic freedom and the y-axis personal freedom. Under this model, authoritarian societies including Italian Fascism, Third Reich Germany, Stalin’s U.S.S.R., and Franco’s Spain would reside near the bottom of the far-left, given all of these societies restricted individual social behavior to a

predefined set supporting the “common good”, and economic freedom was essentially non-existent, albeit the explanatory reasons for the lack of individual control varied. Anarchism resides on the highest point on the y-axis. The specific model of libertarianism and anarchism effects where it resides on the x-axis, given some models (i.e. anarchist-communism) deny private property rights.

The Antifa movement is not easily classifiable on this spectrum, given the range of political ideologies present in the movement. The movement tends to be anti-capitalist, yet the definition of capitalist ranges from any entity profiting from surplus value of labor, while others focus solely on “crony capitalism”, which is essentially corporatism – not free market capitalism. Participation in the movement does not require affiliation with any specific political party, and prior to the rise of Trumpism, eschewing the mainstream political parties was the most socially acceptable position by far.

The economic-personal freedom X-Y political spectrum fails to differentiate between Nazism and Fascism, and its counter-movements. The question of who benefits from the proposed system of governance is important for differentiating these systems – an issue which is impossible to neatly depict on a graph. Nazism and Fascism benefits the group deemed pure by leadership, typically a racial, ethnic, or cultural group which is deemed superior to all others and/or requires protection to ensure adequate propagation into the future. In Nazism, the pure German and others of “Aryan” characteristics were given higher status than those who were deemed inferior and detrimental to society: the Jewish people, gypsies, the mentally ill, Polish and Czech individuals, etc. With the classical opponents to fascism, the dividing characteristic in society is not racial, ethnic, or cultural – it is class-based, and a class war is necessary for the proletariat (working-class) to overcome oppression by the bourgeoisie (business and political elites). Assuming strict adherence to Nazi ideology, a successful German business elite and a working-poor German man, assuming no mental illness or other negative characteristic, are both superior to any Jewish, Polish, or Czech person. The opponents classified the successful German business elite, Jewish banking elite, or any other bourgeois-class member as being detrimental to working-class Germans, Russians, Czechs, Jews, etc. In one system, ethnic-racial groups are united in a common cause against other ethnic-racial groups, regardless of socioeconomic status. The opposition classifies individuals by socioeconomic status and unites the oppressed in a common cause against the elite, regardless of ethnic-racial groupings.

Both systems are collectivist in nature, placing higher importance on the collective group over the individuals composing the groups. The

average American libertarian or constitutionalist places significantly greater importance on the individual, rejecting the collective groupings in many cases. This is why a white libertarian is baffled or even infuriated by ideas such as “white privilege”, given the libertarian views the world in terms of distinct individuals, while the proponent of “white privilege” ideas views the world in terms of a Marxist-influenced class system.

Given the shortcomings of each system, perhaps an alternative political spectrum will best encapsulate differences in political philosophy? Given the economic-personal freedom two-dimensional system, an anarchist-communist and libertarian-constitutionalist should be similar in political philosophy, with the exception of the latter still accepting the state – albeit in very restricted terms. However, anyone who has spent significant time observing debates amongst two anarchist groups – the anarchist-capitalists (“ancaps”) and anarchist-communists (“ancoms”) – has observed how quickly many debates degrade to personal insults. At best, both groups view each other as having diametrically opposed ideologies. Perhaps a separate political spectrum for anarchists is necessary? However, a separate political spectrum for anarchists relegates anarchists to different, likely to be perceived as extremist and/or lesser – in the political debate. In the following section, we will discuss potential alternatives to these two commonly utilized political spectrums, using radically different factors to measure political ideology graphically.

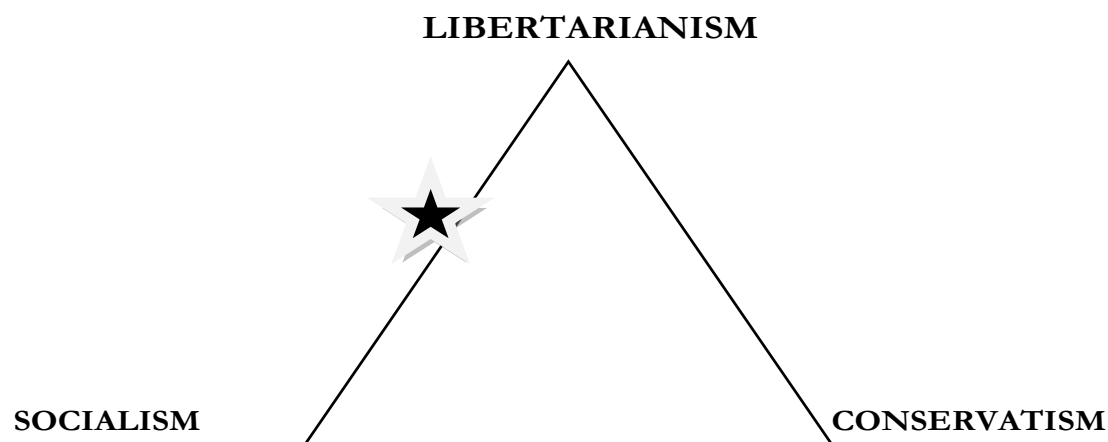
## **Alternative Spectrums**

If the linear and two-dimensional political spectrums fail to account for important characteristics of political belief, is there perhaps a superior model to utilize? A model capable of mapping correlates to the emergence of revolutionary and reactionary movements in response to mainstream political belief systems? Are reactionary and revolutionary movements actually polar opposites or different sides of the same coin? In this brief discussion of possible alternative political spectrums, we will attempt to construct a model of political belief which adequately demonstrates the interrelationships between sociopolitical movements.

Numerous studies have found a positive correlation between right-wing political belief and conscientiousness, specifically its subtype “orderliness”. This is frequently observed with conservative and reactionary groups, whose organizations are exemplified by clearly-defined hierarchies and roles. Individuals in reactionary groups are often clean-cut, with shaved or very short hair readily observable. Uniforms are often worn, with a clearly-defined connection between the uniform and rank. Neo-fascist groups often express pride in their appearance and cleanliness.

On the other hand, socialists and progressives tend to have greater variety in sexual behavior, gender identity, clothing and hair styles, and engage in civic protests with a wide array of primary objectives. A desire to include everyone except for those deemed exclusionary runs in opposition to the very strict codes of behavior for neo-fascist groups. Could a spectrum be designed mapping political belief on the basis of correlations to agreeableness, conscientiousness, and disgust tolerance? Agreeable individuals tend to be more empathetic for the plight of the impoverished and other oppressed classifications, conscientiousness – specifically orderliness – is positively correlated with conservatism, and as disgust tolerance increases, the willingness to accept immigrants of varying cultures also increases. Or would this simply be a case of using proxy variables and as a result, unnecessarily increasing the complexity of the model?

The three major political positions within American politics are conservatism, progressivism, and libertarianism. Progressivism, taken to an extreme, results in state socialism. Conservatism, taken to an extreme, results in either monarchism or fascism. Libertarianism, taken to an extreme, results in individualistic anarchism.



This model depicts the Antifa movement's general political-leaning, mapped somewhere between socialism and libertarianism in complete opposition to conservatism. Left libertarianism and right libertarianism, while frequently perceiving the world from widely-differing frameworks, often present solutions capable of coexisting, albeit in separate, perhaps loosely federated, communities.

Consider other possibilities for modeling political belief. The modeling of political belief is frequently arbitrary, yet the sociocultural effects are real. The social division between libertarians of the Ron Paul and Tom Woods variety, and those who adhere to the teachings of Bakunin and specific interpretations of Marx, often agree on fundamental philosophical principles: the initiation of aggressive force against another



is immoral, the individual has a fundamental right of self-ownership, and economic issues should be handled at a more-localized level, whether through the local councils of trade unionism or syndicalism or through completely free markets. However, these groups are often pitted against each other on the basis of one being of the “left-wing” and the other of the “right-wing” when both share more in common with each other than their respective mainstream parties associated with their plotted position.

## **Anarchism on the Spectrum**

Where do anarchists reside on the political spectrum? Anarchists are often considered extreme leftists, likely given their association with communitarian-based ideas. However, anarchists are not easily classifiable on the standard political spectrum. Anarchists believe in a system of governance by the people in the absence of “the state” – a centralized governing institution with a privileged status over the people.

On the right-wing, conservatives claim to stand for limited government. Does that make anarchism an extreme right-wing ideology, given its rejection of the state? Some modern-day anarchist philosophers, including Stefan Molyneux, tend to reject leftist ideas in favor of supporting more right-leaning, smaller government-based ideas. Even if conservatives absolutely abide by the axiom of less government is better, does a less restrictive government adhere more to anarchism than more government interventionism? Right-wing politicians are also frequently associated with social conservatism, which is perceived as further oppressing non-heterosexual and other ethnic and gender identity minorities in the population. Left-wing politicians frequently purport to be advocating for civil rights and social equality – standard principles for many anarchists. The public welfare programs, including universal health care and tuition-free college, are discussed more frequently amongst left-wing politicians. However, the state would be administering these programs. If the state is being rejected as an oppressive mechanism, how could an anarchist support political philosophy which advocates for increased governmental interventionism?

Utilizing the two-dimensional political spectrum, anarchism would reside in the high personal freedom, high economic freedom portion of the spectrum, given the voluntary nature of most anarchistic paradigms. This would align anarchists more closely with libertarians and provides a pictorial representation of the split between conservative and mainstream liberal political philosophies. However, sects within anarchism disagree with how society should be constructed, typically disagreeing on

whether society should be purely individualistic, purely collectivistic, or somewhere in between.

A completely separate political spectrum could be utilized for anarchist philosophies. However, this separates anarchism from other political philosophies, potentially delegating it to a lesser status than other philosophies – even though the mainstream already derides anarchism as being equivalent to chaos. On the far-left would be the anarchic-communists, who believe in a collectivistic society of people working for the common good. On the far-right would be anarcho-capitalists, who believe in complete liberty of the individual and free markets without interference from governing bodies. In an ideal society, individuals would be able to choose which form of community to reside in, and each could compete, demonstrating the best aspects of both.

## **Thinking Outside the Spectrum**

Political spectrums provide an easy way to illustrate varying political philosophies. However, political spectrums fail to be inclusive of the important factors related to specific political ideologies. One must “think outside the spectrum”. The false dichotomy of left-right or Democrat-Republican creates social tension in American society, and similar tensions have arisen in other societies. The underlying ideas are what should be evaluated, with consideration given not only to the political beliefs which seem to best suit your individual tastes, but also to the beliefs which create discomfort for you. Are all conservatives and libertarians<sup>1</sup> evil people who want the poor to die in the street, with no health care or food? Not at all. Are all liberals wanting to take away your freedom and guns and force your children to be indoctrinated with beliefs you disagree with? No to this question as well. The vast majority of people in society are basically in agreement of what social problems require attention. Complex social problems also have more than one solution, and with every solution comes trade-offs. Perhaps if individuals set aside their differences in idealistic opinions and unified in opposition to corrupt governmental systems, social change could be more rapidly implemented. However, a nation divided is much easier to control when they are fighting amongst themselves, instead of fighting the source of society's ills.

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<sup>1</sup> Libertarian in this context refers to the standard American libertarian movement and its historical influences. Reduction of the size and scope of government is the focus of this political philosophy, with a focus on free, voluntary markets being the basis of economic interactions.

## Forms of Anarchism

Anarchism is typically aligned with the far-left of the political spectrum, given the common perception of many anarchists being allied with socialists and communists. Others align anarchism with the far-right, believing that the right-wing is defined by less governance, so by that metric, a movement which abhors the state in its entirety would be an extreme far-right political philosophy.

Anarchist philosophy is not easily classifiable on the standard political spectrum, given its wide-range of beliefs which fall under the umbrella of anarchism. Anarchist communists, anarchist primitivists, and anarchist capitalists frequently debate each other's idea on message boards on-line – visit the Reddit sites for anarcho-capitalists and anarcho-communists respectively. Similar to how the standard political spectrum includes groups which have significantly opposing views, yet all share a common belief that some form of “the state” is necessary in society. Anarchism rejects the state yet includes the variety of the standard political spectrum. In this section, we will provide an overview of some of the major philosophies under the anarchism umbrella, focusing on the groups which have the most significant involvement in the Antifa movement.

### Anarchist-Communism

*William: What! Do you mean to say that the gentlefolks' property is ours?*

*Jack: Certainly; it is our property; it is everybody's property. Who gave it to the rich people? How have they earned it? What right had they to seize upon it and what right have they to keep it?*

*William: But their ancestors have left it to them.*

*Jack: And who gave it to their ancestors? Look here now; the strongest and the luckiest took advantage of their strength or their luck to take possession of everything and so forced the others to work for them; and not satisfied with living in idleness themselves, oppressing and starving the greater part of their contemporaries, they must needs leave their sons and grandsons the fortune they have usurped, thus condemning future generations to be the slaves of their descendants; though now these descendants have become so enfeebled by indolence and the long exercise of power, that they could never do to-day what their forefathers did long ago. Does all this seem to you just?*<sup>1</sup>

The above passage from Malatesta (2009) illustrates the general perception of property and the state from the anarcho-communist perspective. Property is theft, given that the laborers of the land are not

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<sup>1</sup> Malatesta, 2009.

given ownership rights. While landowners may argue that the land was inherited or purchased through legal means, anarcho-communists tend to believe that the initial acquisition of land was through illegitimate means. Anarcho-communists do not believe the state should intervene with dividing the land between workers – the society as a whole should abandon the idea of land ownership and work towards collective goals. Personal property is typically upheld, with items such as toothbrushes or a phone being acceptable forms of property to be owned. A toothbrush factory or cell phone system should be owned collectively by the workers or society as a whole, though.

The goal of anarcho-communists is to have a stateless society where the workers own the means of production. Many anarcho-communists reject Stalinism, Maoism, and other forms of state communism, referring to it as “state-capitalist tyrannies” and other maligning terms.<sup>1</sup> Mikhail Bakunin, a well-known libertarian socialist philosopher, stated, “I detest communism because it is the negation of liberty... I am not a communist because communism... necessarily ends with the concentration of property in the hands of the state.”<sup>2</sup>

This philosophy will be discussed further in the following chapter. An important distinction is between anarchist communism and libertarian communism. All anarchist communists are libertarian communists. However, the umbrella of libertarian communists includes forms of limited-state communism which anarchist communism rejects. Capitalism is deemed to be an evil which advances oppression. Communal ownership through a stateless society is deemed the answer.

### **Anarchist-Capitalism**

Anarchist-capitalism is seemingly the most significant non-statist rival to the anarchist-capitalists, given the numerous debates witnessed on-line between the “ancaps” and “ancoms”. Anarchist capitalists believe that free markets are immensely preferable to corporatist / statist arrangements, and individual contractual relationships can replace state institutions.

Anarchist-capitalist philosophers, including Murray Rothbard, reject the state as being a feudalistic, anti-liberty force. Classical liberalism is valued, and the decline of radicalism in liberal circles is noted as problematic. Rothbard discusses the decline of classical liberalism in the West as being caused by two factors:

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1 Price, 2008.

2 I.b.i.d. Quote verified to be quoted accurately from its secondary source, Leier, 2006.

1. The abandonment of natural rights and “higher law” theory for utilitarianism.
2. The rise in prominence of social Darwinist philosophy.

The shift from radical to quasi-conservative philosophy left a vacuum in the radical left, which resulted in the rise of socialism. Socialism, according to Rothbard, while being to the left of conservatism, is not the answer. “Socialism... was, and still is, middle-of-the-road because it tries to achieve liberal ends by the use of conservative means.”<sup>1</sup> In essence, socialism is in-line with fascism, as a philosophy espousing radical goals, yet utilizes reactionary methods to attain and maintain power.

Both anarchist-capitalists and anarchist-communists identify the state as being a source of oppression. Both also identify the current corporatist system as being detrimental to society, with the state and multinational corporations working hand-in-hand to oppress the populace for personal acquisition of wealth and power. However, the disagreement arises in the discussion of property. Anarchist-capitalists believe in personal ownership of property; anarchist-communists reject personal ownership of property. Anarchist-capitalists would acknowledge the legitimacy of a person who acquires massive accumulations of wealth through ethical means. The anarchist-communist would reject the legitimacy of this individual, stating the inequality in wealth leads to oppressive systems of control.

The anarchist-communists are typically aligned towards the left on the political spectrum, given the focus on battling for the collective benefit of the general populace. The anarchist-capitalists, on the other hand, are typically aligned with the right of the political spectrum, given its staunch individualism and protection of private property rights – albeit, not protection from a state entity. Various other forms of anarchism, such as syndicalism, primitivism, feminism, and others possess varying degrees of special interests, not necessarily easy to align on a political spectrum. In the common fight of the people against tyranny, the anarchist-capitalists and anarchist-communists have a commonly-defined enemy. However, instead of uniting against the enemy, many within each movement devote significant energy defeating the other. Both sides point to historically relevant cases of each system working on a limited-scale. However, given that states own what is essentially all of the habitable land on the planet, implementation of either system on a large-scale is impossible, unless the state can be overthrown. In a pure anarchistic society, various groups would have the right to implement differing societal structures, and each

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1 Rothbard, 2002.

individual could voluntarily decide which form of society to live under. Idealism and purism, in the case of many anarchists, leads to fighting amongst themselves, instead of fighting in a unified fashion against the tyrannical state.

## Conclusion

Political spectrums and various on-line tests provide a way to categorize political beliefs into easy-to-relay labels. However, sociopolitical and economic issues are more complex than dichotomies or even a spectrum. Each issue has a multitude of perspectives, with numerous potential solutions. For example, numerous progressives desire government programs for addressing homelessness, poverty, health services, and other social programs, while at the same time, rejecting state intervention when it comes to medical and recreational marijuana.

The seeming inconsistent stances of Republicans and Democrats, who espouse differing perspectives on ending imperialism and corporate fraud, has resulted in a migration to the “libertarian” label for those who are anti-imperialism and pro-individualism. Others have migrated to the socialist label, especially with the rise in popularity of Bernie Sanders and his left-wing populist “Democratic Socialism” platform. Approximately half of the U.S. population neglected the duty to vote, mostly out of apathy, with many believing none of the corporatist political parties actually represent their beliefs.

Adherence to specific political parties or ideologies results in instances of cognitive dissonance. When President Barack Obama increases military involvement in Syria and openly discusses using drones in warfare, Democrat-loyalist voters must either recognize the inconsistencies between the actions of the Democratic Party and their beliefs, or rationalize the action in such a way where it justifies the actions under the staunchly-held belief system. The cognitive dissonance results in increased anxiety, which is frequently expressed through aggression. Observe a typical Facebook feed of someone who is anti-Trump. Even when the Trump administration passes legislation which appears to be in-line with progressive values (i.e. human trafficking bill in December 2017, additional funding for historically African American colleges), the legislation is either ignored or rationalized in such a manner to “discover” inherent racism, homophobia, sexism, etc. Publicly-announced death threats to the president have increased by an exorbitant amount in 2017.

The cognitive dissonance has resulted in an increase in membership in groups politically-dissident groups, including Antifa. This creates a potentially detrimental situation for Antifa's anarchist core, given

these new allies are acting on built-up fury, not on core values of (typically “left-wing”) anarchism. This creates situations where Black Blocs have included the anarchist core and other revolutionaries, angry progressives and liberals, and government operatives, increasing the likelihood of unwarranted violence. An alliance with libertarians would be more beneficial in advancing anti-statist, anti-fascist values, given similar ideas regarding the state as being problematic, instead of becoming an ally as part of passing an anti-Trump fad.

The changing perception of Antifa from being an anarchist group to an anti-Trump violent progressive group has shifted many libertarians into the category of “right-wing”, causing them to be labeled as the enemy. Many libertarians view Antifa as being analogous to a paramilitary arm of the Democratic Party, with some groups identifying as “Antifa” or under the Anti-Racist Action banner having significant membership which identifies as being a Hillary Clinton supporter and/or Democrat voter. While having allies willing to engage in battle is beneficial in the short-term, it could create irreparable harm if the progressives become the majority of the movement, pushing out the anarchist core. Many anarchist groups have already begun to distance themselves from the Antifa movement, despite simultaneously retaining an anti-fascist ideology and continuing engagement in Black Bloc tactics.

## **Recommended Readings**

Gary Allen's *None Dare Call It Conspiracy* (1972).

Noam Chomsky's *On Anarchism* (2013). The New Press.

Peter Kropotkin's *The Conquest of Bread* (2016). Loki's Publishing.

Llewellyn H. Rockwell Jr.'s *Against the State: An Anarcho-Capitalist Manifesto* (2014). Rockwell Communication.

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## Chapter II – Philosophical Influences

*“To call yourself an anarchist is to invite identification with an unpredictable array of associations, an ensemble which is unlikely to mean the same thing to any two people, including any two anarchists.”<sup>1</sup>*

Each and every modern-day sociopolitical movement developed from historical influences, whether in the form of individual ideas, ideologies, or a positive perception of an ideologue. Whether the movement is a Christian white identarian movement, or a radical atheistic gender liberation movement, its emergence can be traced to specific historical events and influencing factors. Two diametrically opposed social movements can emerge from not only the same set of environmental conditions but also by interpreting the same ideology in radically differing ways.

It is necessary to distinguish between influences of anarchist movements, influences of socialist movements, and influences of the Antifa movement itself, in the study of Antifa specifically. Members of the Antifa movement are rarely definable as nothing more than an Antifa, nor was their path to Antifa one from no involvement in sociopolitical groups straight into an Antifa affiliate or Black Bloc. Antifa is essentially an ad hoc sociopolitical movement designed to address a specific problem. If the stated problem is resolved to the standards of the Antifa movement, membership will decline and activity will radically decrease, if not cease altogether. However, individuals and groups of a variety of political orientations participate either as allies of or actual members of the Antifa movement. Teasing out the influencing philosophies of the liberal-progressives, state socialists, libertarians, anarchists, syndicalists, and ethnic or gender liberation movements that are irrelevant to our study is a task likely to lead to differing opinions. However, I will attempt to cover an adequate breadth of philosophical influences to facilitate an understanding of influencing factors of the social movement.

### Basis of Anarchist Philosophies

Four conditions are necessary for a philosophy to be considered anarchistic<sup>2</sup>:

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<sup>1</sup> Kerl, 2010.

<sup>2</sup> Ames, 1983.

1. A metaphysical conception of human nature which requires freedom as an ideal, and necessary, condition.
2. A complete rejection of coercive authority.
3. A stateless alternative conception of society.
4. A plan for achieving a stateless society.

These four conditions will be utilized to assess whether a certain historical philosophy is anarchistic. A combination of stated influences of prominent members of the Antifa movement, stated influences from within the general anarchist movement – specifically the community-minded anarchist movements, and influences that can be traced from origin to present in a logically coherent manner, retaining a reasonable degree of semblance to the originating philosophy, will be discussed.

## Laozi, Zhuangzi & Daoism

*"A leader is best when people barely know that he exists, not so good when people obey and acclaim him, worst when they despise him. Fail to honor people, They fail to honor you. But of a good leader, who talks little, when his work is done, his aims fulfilled, they will all say, "We did this ourselves.""*

The earliest historical antecedent to anarchistic philosophy is likely Daoism. The philosophy of Laozi (Lau Tzu), the believed-to-be founder of Daoism (Taoism) in approximately 600 B.C., is one of the oldest philosophical influences to modern anarchism. It is unclear whether Laozi was an actual, living person, or simply a pseudonym for a collection of writings called *Tao Te Ching*. Laozi asserted that only natural, uncoerced, and voluntary action is acceptable, restriction to this process creates the seeds for disorder and chaos, and everyone has the right to defend their ability to live.

The concept of *wu-wei*, or non-action, is interpreted by some as being anarchistic; others, including Feldt, offer alternative interpretations for *wu-wei*.<sup>2</sup> Many scholars accept that *wu-wei* rejects authoritarianism. However, it does not necessarily reject the state.<sup>3</sup> The universe is perceived as being in a constant state of flux, with a dynamic interplay of opposing forces. The related concepts of *ying* and *yang* originate from Daoism. The *Dao* is the originator of heaven and earth, and the *ying* – feminine power associated with darkness, coldness, and receptivity, and the *yang* – masculine power associated with brightness, warmth, and activity – are the complementary, opposing forces in the cosmos.

Zhuang Zhou, the philosopher credited with the writing of *Zhuangzi*, mirrored similar sentiments and ideas of Laozi, focusing on the propagation of radical ideas regarding ultimate truth and humanity. The most basic tenant of post-modernism emerged in *Zhuangzi* – that truth is relative given the artificial distinctions created by humankind based on arbitrary prejudices. The only truth is the cosmos is a dynamic, indivisible system of which we – humanity – are a part of. The concept of property being theft, wealth being distributed inequitably, and a communitarian-minded collectivist ideal society can all be traced to the *Zhuangzi* as one of the original documented sources of this philosophy.

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1 S. Beck translation of *Tao Te Ching*, available from <http://www.geekfarm.org/cgi-bin/tao.pl?translation=beck>. Verified presence of similar translation in Vintage Books Edition (1989), translated by Gia-Fu Feng and Jane English.

2 Feldt, 2010.

3 Josh, 2005; Kwan, "Daoism & Anarchism".

The philosophy of Laozi does not reject authority in totality; however, authoritarian coercion is rejected. The leader is essentially a chosen representative of the people, who retains membership in the class of the people, working hand-in-hand towards achieving mutual societal goals. This philosophy mirrors left libertarianism of modern day, where the state is not necessarily eliminated – it is simply re-purposed for the benefit of society-at-large.

Daoist philosophy focuses on the equity of importance between negative and positive freedom, and the individual being a part of a larger community. That community is part of a larger cosmic whole. Western anarchists tend to focus on self-determination and uncoerced behavior as being central expressions of humanity. While some anarchists value individualism over the community to a more significant degree, most western anarchists believe in uncoerced behavior and voluntary interactions. Even most anarcho-communists reject any coerced participation in specific societal roles – every member should be productive within society through voluntary interactions and associations, working towards common community goals. Daoist philosophy also focuses on non-violent action – these early philosophers, given their stated philosophy, would likely reject the Black Bloc and other militant tactics.

## **Zeno of Citrium & Stoicism**

*“In the life of an individual man, virtue is the sole good; such things as health, happiness, possessions, are of no account. Since virtue resides in the will, everything really good or bad in a man’s life depends only upon himself. He may be poor, but what of it? He can still be virtuous. He may be sentenced to death, but he can die nobly, like Socrates. Other men have power only over externals; virtue, which alone is truly good, rests entirely with the individual. Therefore every man has perfect freedom, provided he emancipates himself from mundane desires.”<sup>1</sup>*

Anarchists and libertarians, whether intentionally or as a result of independent reasoning, frequently adopt general world-views or specific axioms of ancient philosophers. Analogous to Daoism, Laozi, and Zhuangzi, Zeno of Citrium and other ancient Stoics left written records which later influenced anarchism and its related, limited government movements.

Zeno of Citium is a Greek philosopher of the Hellenistic period, who resided in Athens around 300 B.C. Studying with a renowned Cynic of the time, he adapted aspects of cynicism to construct an influential new

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1 Quotation attributed to Zeno of Citrium, sourced from Haselhurst, 2012.

form of philosophy, later termed stoicism. *Kathekon* – the idea that one must act in accordance with nature and individual souls are interconnected in the universe – is a central idea of early stoic philosophy. A single, simple “good” exists; the goal is to strive for the universal good, which is the only true virtue.<sup>1</sup>

Over time, stoicism evolved into a philosophy centered around defying tyranny. According to Epictetus, “If the government directed them to do something that their reason opposed, they were to defy the government. If it told them to do what their reason would have told them to do anyway, they did not need a government.”<sup>2</sup>

Modern-day stoicism adopts aspects of its philosophical roots for perceived modern-day ills. Perceived and criticized by some as being nihilistic, it does not require that one live one's life denying all happiness and pleasure. However, aspects of the philosophy, including negative visualization<sup>3</sup>, assist one with coping with troubling events. With respect to anarchistic movements, the idea of individual will and good over tyranny and group-think continues to be its most long-lasting influence on critiques of, and action against, the state.

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1 Mastin, 2008.

2 Kindley, 2011.

3 Sherman, 2015. Negative visualization is the process of visualizing the worst likely outcome, addressing it cognitively, so that when the event passes, it will have a less devastating effect.

## Diggers Movement

*“The way to cast out Kingly Power is not to cast it out by Sword; for this doth set him in more power, and removes him from a weaker to a stronger hand. The only way to cast him out is for the people to leave him to himself, to forsake fighting and all oppression, and to live in love one towards another. The Power of Love is the True Saviour.”<sup>1</sup>*

Aspects of anarchist philosophy can be traced to multiple centuries ago; few societies or groups attempted to implement full anarchism after the rise of civilization. Many anarchist publications and historians trace the source of modern anarchism to a movement of early Quakers who called themselves the “Children of Light”, a societal movement referred to as the Diggers Movement.

The Diggers Movement was founded by Gerrard Winstanley. Born in the County of Landshire, England, on October 10<sup>th</sup>, 1609, he received a middle-class education and worked successfully as a trader during his young adulthood. However, his assets and estate were lost after war broke out. Winstanley was forced into the countryside. Without his rather rapid downfall, the Diggers Movement would have likely never been created. It would not have been created by Winstanley, at least.

Early in 1649, a small group of unemployed and landless peasants led by Winstanley and William Everard gathered on St. George's Hill, a parcel of common land, with the goal of cultivating the land to feed the starving landless, dispossessed peasants of the republic. Initially, this drew little notice – only a bit of sympathy. The group was named the “Diggers”. After a few months, the landowners of the community became worried and utilized a mob to detain the group at a local church. Shortly after release, the Diggers were detained in a nearby town of Kingston. Shortly after release from Kingston, an official complaint was made to the Council of State and two groups of cavalries were sent to investigate the diggers.<sup>2</sup>

Captain Gladman returned to Lord Thomas Fairfax, reporting the affairs of the Diggers were of trivial import. Everard and Winstanley were sent to London to discuss their plans with Lord Fairfax themselves. A month later, Lord Fairfax visited the community and stated the issue of the issue of the diggers was to be an issue for the community to handle.

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<sup>1</sup> Quote from 1906 book *The Digger Movement in the Days of the Commonwealth* by Lewis H. Berens. The quote is by Gerrard Winstanley of the Digger Movement, from his essay “A New Year's Gift for the Parliament and Army”.

<sup>2</sup> Arctor, 2014.

That June, local soldiers and a citizen mob assaulted the diggers and trampled their crops. Subsequently, Winstanley complained to Lord Fairfax who, apparently still perceiving the diggers as being a diminutively harmless group, ordered the soldiers to leave the diggers alone. Shortly thereafter, the diggers began cutting the wooded area in the common area to sell. The landowners sued the diggers, resulting in a verdict in favor of the landowners of ten pounds and associated costs. Winstanley's cattle were confiscated from the commons, likely to facilitate repayment of the court-imposed fines.

Following the negative experiences at St. George's Hill, the diggers relocated to Cobham Manor – another common area. The diggers built four houses and planted a crop of winter grain. At the beginning, the diggers were a small group, numbering around a dozen individuals; at this point, the diggers numbered around fifty individuals. Lord Fairfax, likely fearing the potential societal upheaval of the unconventional social movement, sent in troops, who destroyed two houses and trampled the winter crop.

The diggers continued to persist. By spring, the diggers had eleven acres of grain growing and seven houses. Similar movements began in Northamptonshire and Kent. John Platt, a clergyman and landlord, turned his cattle loose on the field of grain and led a makeshift mob, destroying the field and houses, driving out the diggers and their families. Few of the diggers remained. On April 1<sup>st</sup>, 1950, Winstanley and fourteen remaining others were indicted for disorderly conduct, unlawful assembly, and criminal trespass, ending the digger movement.<sup>1</sup>

The Digger movement, despite being a religious movement, is credited as being one of the earliest communist and anarchist movements. Winstanley, after failing in the feudalistic system of the time, and recognizing the corruption within the theocratic ranks, sought to utilize so-called “public property” to assist the public good. Even after gaining approval from Lord Fairfax, his movement was quickly quashed once it began to threaten the class interests of those in power – the landowners, the theocracy, and the ruling class. The general idea of utilizing public land for public good can still be seen today, in community gardens, food pantries, and other services where small groups gather in the community to provide services to assist those in need within that specific community.

Also, controversial social movements can potentially win over a community by utilizing a similar tactics. If your Antifa or ARA affiliate was widely-known as the organization who sponsored the community garden, the soup kitchen, a major food pantry, or provide for some other

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1 I.b.i.d.

basic necessity, would it not be more difficult to argue against their importance for the greater good of the community? This is a tactic utilized by the Bay Area National Anarchists (BANA), a group which frequently stands in opposition to Antifa and ARA on many tactical and philosophical issues, with the exception of rejection of the state.

Redneck Revolt is one group under the Antifa social movement umbrella to utilize community service to gain support. Redneck Revolt has engaged in needle exchange programs in California and provided food to low-income and homeless populations in other areas.



## Étienne de La Boétie

*“I see no good in having several lords: Let one alone be master, let one alone be king.”<sup>1</sup>*

Etienne de La Boétie (1530 – 1563), a French philosopher and legislator, is credited as being one of the earliest influences of the modern anarchist and libertarian movements. La Boétie questioned why members of society consented to their own enslavement to tyrannical authority and called for a withdrawal of consent, not bloodshed, as the most effective opposition to tyranny.

Numerous reasons exist for why people comply with tyrannical governmental systems. The most commonly held belief, that people complied out of fear, seemed insufficient. La Boétie hypothesized that other reasons, including habit, self-interest, privilege, influence of state tricks, propaganda, and symbols, were more important for influencing compliance and obedience.<sup>2</sup> While understandable that a child is under the authority of a parent due to lack of adequate mental faculties, upon adulthood, it is unethical for an individual to be enslaved to another when one's cognitive capabilities are fully developed.<sup>3</sup> La Boétie argued that mass civil disobedience was more radical than political assassination, given that political assassination was an isolated, individual incident within an existing political system; mass civil disobedience attacked the fundamental political system itself.<sup>4</sup>

La Boétie discussed other ideas applicable to modern-day libertarian and anarchist philosophy. La Boétie framed the government as a collective of individuals who acquire the rightful property of the people, only to return a very small fraction back to the people in the form of miniscule public services. From this perspective, taxation is perceived as being theft, while property ownership is perceived as being a fundamental human right.

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1 La Boétie, 1975, pg. 41.

2 Presley, 2017.

3 Rothbard, 2010.

4 I.b.i.d.

## William Godwin

*“Whenever government assumes to deliver us from the trouble of thinking for ourselves, the only consequences it produces are those of torpor and imbecility.”<sup>1</sup>*

William Godwin is considered by many within a wide-array of anarchist and minimal-governmental movements. In the preceding years of the French Revolution, Godwin was a well-respected international philosophy and political scholar. The cabinet considered filing legal proceedings against Godwin after the 1793 publication of Godwin's seminal work, *An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Political Justice and Its Influence on General Virtue and Happiness*, but given its cost of three guineas, a price only affordable to the landowning elites, likely influenced the cessation of legal charges.<sup>2</sup> Towards the end of the French Revolution, Godwin fell out of favor, only to be rediscovered by a later generation, including Kropotkin, famous poet and his son-in-law Shelley, and others.<sup>344</sup>

Godwin paved the way for post-modernism in its essential form, theorizing that no absolute truths exist – even mathematical and scientific facts are only predictions with greater or less probability. Given the absence of absolute truth, reasoning is necessary to ensure greatest predictive value of theories.<sup>5</sup> Reasoning is based on human experience, which Godwin divides into two general categories: sensation and understanding. Unlike other theorists of the time, including John Locke, whose idea of *tabula rasa*<sup>6</sup> was shared with Godwin, Godwin asserted that understanding possessed specific qualities separate from sensory perception and experience.

Given the importance of experience on shaping one's character, birth and rank must not affect the way people are treated. According to Godwin, it does not necessarily follow that all people are morally equal: some people have higher moral value than others.<sup>12</sup> Acting morally requires self-ownership of judgment and reasoning capacities.<sup>3</sup>

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1 Godwin, 1793.

2 Read, 2011.

3 I.b.i.d.

4 Ward.

5 I.b.i.d.

6 The idea of *tabula rasa* (blank slate) refers to humans being completely malleable at birth. Specific variation is the consequence of variation of human experience.

1 Ward.

2 Philp, 2017.

One's own character is a function of experience and the type of government impacts experience. Therefore, corrupt government produces problematic citizens. Godwin describes the ideal society, aligned with human happiness, in terms of a living organism. As tyrannical and omnipotent authoritarianism exerts increasing control over a populace, enslavement over the human mind increases with proportionality.<sup>4</sup> Godwin's communitarian, anti-authoritarian positions have influenced anarchist philosophy for the previous two centuries. Despite his influence, modern anarchist thought, and even nineteenth-century students of his work (i.e. Kropotkin), disagree with many of his fundamental assertions.

Godwin's philosophy, despite being credited as the first “true” anarchist philosophy, includes axioms and conclusions that, on the surface, appear to conflict with anarchism. First, Godwin rejects free will – not free will in the sense that people have the right to be free from tyranny, but free will as a concept rooted in reality. According to Godwin, human decisions are based on judgments, utilizing information collected from antecedent events and sensory experiences. Given that other individuals and factors outside of one's control influence events and environmental conditions, these individuals are able to assert varying degrees of control over others, affecting actualization of free will. Also, if free will were to be a realizable state-of-being, then motives and emotions would need to be discounted, given the mind cannot first be influenced by inner motives and/or emotions, then choose to reject the influence to achieve free will.

The second point seemingly contrary to modern anarchistic thought is Godwin's rejection of cooperation. This does not equate to a rejection of the expression of cooperation in all forms, but a rejection of being cooperative as a natural, isolated phenomenon. Godwin asserts that individuals act in self-interest – altruism is an unnatural state of being for mankind. Given this assertion, coupled with uncontrolled egoism of the power elite leading to oppression of the masses, achieving political justice must focus on its social utility to the individual. Happiness, virtue, knowledge, and liberty must be valued, with happiness possessing the greatest weight as the only absolute value. “The goal is therefore the elimination... of selfish interest and subjectivity in one's dealings with others. The needs of each person, including oneself, are to be accorded equal value in deciding a course of action.”<sup>1</sup> Starting with axioms that

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3 I.b.i.d.

4 Read, 2011.

1 Godwin, 1793.

many modern anarchist philosophers would disagree with, Godwin concluded with objectives that are central to modern anarchism.

## Pierre-Joseph Proudhon

*“That anarchism changed into something very different from the original conception is not just of academic interest. We face greatest challenges in our history from the Leviathan State and the New World Order. Only a mass popular movement can save us. A people divided will never succeed in this endeavor. Proudhon’s philosophy provides a foundation on which to build such a movement. He is one of those rare thinkers who provides a bridge between populism and libertarianism and between “left” and “right” libertarianism.”*<sup>2</sup>

Pierre-Joseph Proudhon is credited as one of the first modern anarchists. He declared, “property is theft” – property as in large-scale property ownership where the owner benefits disproportionately to the worker, not small-property ownership of family dwellings, farmed land, tools, and the product of one's own labor – a quote commonly repeated amongst anarchist-communists, syndicalists, and other “left” anarchists. According to Proudhon, “the goal of anarchy is merely to limit authority” to the greatest degree possible, with the shared utopia parlayed by socialists of the time being an impractical, dangerous myth.<sup>3</sup> Mutualism, involving voluntary interactions and trade, not collectivism, was the goal, with collectivism being perceived as a step towards a new form of authoritarianism. Proudhon called for abolition of the banking system and patriotic action not for one's artificially-defined nation-state but for one's own people of shared culture, language, and common geography. The process of increasing liberty, not the end goal of anarchism, was of greater importance.

Proudhon's writings include numerous controversial statements, leading to many anarchist and socialist activists downplaying his role in the development of modern-day anarchist thought. Proudhon attacked Marx, Rothschild, and other prominent Jewish people on the basis of their ethnicity, writing in one diary entry, “The Jew is the enemy of the human race. One must send this race back to Asia or exterminate it... by fire or by fusion, or by expulsion the Jew must disappear.”<sup>1</sup> These statements are of a form that even modern-day bogeymen of the anti-fascist movement (i.e. Dr. David Duke and Richard Spencer) have admitted similar sentiments to be a bit extreme for classifying all Jewish

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2 Gambone, 2004, pg. 1. Quote is Larry Gambone's and provides a useful perspective on Proudhon's work.

3 I.b.i.d.

1 Rubenstein, 1987, p. 71.

people in the same category as the “Zionist elites”. Proudhon expressed views that would likely be deemed misogynistic if expressed today. Allied groups would likely be deemed hypocritical or even face being attacked as being misogynistic and racist if proclaiming acceptance of Proudhon's philosophy.

Regardless of his controversial views, Proudhon's philosophy forms the basis of the libertarian socialist and left anarchist movements. His expressed disdain of Rothschild and multinational banking provides a common origin to the right libertarian, conservative, national anarchist and anarchist-capitalist movements. Both general sides, despite differing on perspective<sup>2</sup>, typically agree on the problematic multinational banks and authoritarian systems of government.

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<sup>2</sup> “Left—wing” political movements tend to focus on issues addressing equality and justice, while “right-wing” political movements typically focus on issues addressing liberty and freedom. In Proudhon's own writings, he focused on issues relating to liberty and justice, acknowledging the potential difficulty with reconciling the two.

## Petr Kropotkin

*“Those who are persuaded that Anarchy is a collection of visions relating to the future, and an unconscious striving toward the destruction of all present civilization, are still very numerous; and to clear the ground of such prejudices of our education as maintain this view we should have, perhaps, to enter into many details which it would be difficult to embody...”<sup>1</sup>*

Petr Kropotkin, born in 1842 to a wealthy, land-owning aristocratic family, is one of the most influential – more influential than Marx in many circles – philosophers of the nineteenth-century. The initial divergence of radical, revolutionary left-wing movements can be traced to the critics of Kropotkin on Marx, and vice versa, with Marx representing the Marxist-Leninist (ML), Maoist, and other socialists, who are willing to accept either a transitory state, or a state which oversees society to ensure equity and Kropotkin representing the anarchist factions who reject authoritarianism in totality.

The basis of Kropotkin's arguments resides in his critiques of Darwinism and the rise of social Darwinism spawned by Francis Galton and others in the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century philosophical and scientific community. Unlike the social Darwinists, who perceived society as a constant struggle where the strongest survive, Kropotkin viewed evolution as being primarily a result of cooperation. This influenced his concept of mutual aid, wherein the ideal society consists not of monetary exchanges for products and services, but mutually-beneficial transactions within a self-sufficient society.

Kropotkin rejected Marx and his labor theory of value (to be discussed later in this chapter). The focus should be on power inequity between employer and the employed, supported by state intervention, not on capitalization of surplus value stolen from the proletariat. Through state intervention and power inequity of employer versus the employed present in feudalistic and capitalist economies, artificial scarcity is created, which results in poverty and increasing class division. Through mutual aid, mutual support, and voluntary cooperation, a sufficiently-advanced society – assuming the absence of specific environmental barriers such as inadequate arable farmland – should be able to produce all of the goods it needs and move beyond social classes and centralized authority.

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<sup>1</sup> Kropotkin, 1898.

## Karl Marx

The term Marxism has evolved to encompass a range of constructs much broader than initially proposed through Marx's own theories and propositions. However, the general world-view involving an oppressed class overthrowing an oppressive class of privilege remains applicable, albeit more commonly in reference to race and gender expression than the managerial versus managed labor-centric view of Marx himself.

Marx proposed that capitalism was the source of societal inequality, and an overthrow of the capitalists – the bourgeoisie – by the working-class – the proletariat – was necessary for societal advancement. *Das Kapital* outlined his theories related to capital. The extraction of surplus labor value from the worker, to increase the wealth of the owner, is capitalism. An uprising where the workers seize control over the means was predicted to be a worldwide phenomenon for the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Despite the occurrence of many general strikes and political uprisings, only the Bolshevik revolution was successful in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

As a historian, Marx analyzed history through the lens of historical materialism. Historical materialism focuses on human history in relation to the means of production and theorizes that the means of production shape a society's organizational structure and development. In a historical materialist view, capitalism creates inequality of wealth, and through ownership of the means of production, the elites are able to control the citizenry. The political system in this society will reflect the economic system, which will also consist of an elite few exerting control over the populace, with both groups having clearly delineated and divergent interests. Even society's ideologies are determined by the means of production and related forces; often, religion is utilized to reinforce the legitimacy of the class division within capitalistic and feudalistic societies.

## Friedrich Engels

Friedrich Engels, often associated with Karl Marx, is a lesser-known, but nearly equally as important, influence to many modern-day social movements. Encouraged to enter the business world at a young age – seventeen years of age – by his father, he operated as a businessman by day and radical by night. Utilizing the nom de plume “Friedrich Oswald”, he wrote journalistic works outlining the atrocities of industrial capitalism in *Letters from Wuppertal* and other works. In 1844, he started working directly with Karl Marx, after catching his attention through his written

works. Marx and Engels continued to correspond and collaborate throughout each other's respective careers.

Engels sought to educate the working-class for the purpose of a revolution, and a result of the working-class revolution, a utopian world for the proletariat could be constructed. These ideas influenced the Bolshevik revolution, resulting in the Soviet Union. Under Stalin, the Soviet Union has been blamed for tens of millions of civilian deaths. In the remainder of this section, we will discuss Engels ideas that are of significance to the anti-fascist movement yet differ in substance from Marx's ideas.

Numerous arguments in defense of, and in opposition to, the concepts underlying Marx's and Engel's scientific socialism are available in the academic literature and public domain. To litigate scientific socialism from either perspective is a topic of a full-length text, and given the already lengthy undertaking, will not be discussed in this series. However, it is important to note the inconsistencies between scientific socialism and many voices within the Antifa movement – one could even argue these represent majority views.

Marx and Engels discussed the importance of the family and potential problems with sexually deviant behavior, including homosexuality. This interpretation continued through Stalinist U.S.S.R., Hoxha's Albania, and numerous other socialist movements. Sexuality was defined in terms of science: a male is a male as a result of his penis and a female is a female as a result of a vagina. Deviations from this were labeled disorders. In a post-sexual revolution society, Antifas champion the LGBTQ+ community, expressing a postmodern relativist view of sex and sexuality being a result of personal choice. Jordan Peterson, who has a history of championing civil rights, has been protested and even threatened with physical harm and death as a result of stating male and female are biological terms and identity is determined not by oneself, but by other community members. Gearoid Colmain of *Reseau International* was maligned for representing the scientific socialist view on sexuality by numerous publications, including the *Stalin Society of North America*: “However, due to their attempt to vilify me, I will henceforth have to include the proviso that – while much of their research is good -they still manifest petit-bourgeois views on key topics and that their problem with me is that I support the line of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin and Hoxha on sexuality while they support the line of Obama, Cameron, Hollande and other imperialist leaders.”

Other aspects of bourgeois decadence and an ideological shift from materialism to idealism demarcate the Communist anti-fascists of a century ago from the postmodernist anti-fascists of today. This includes the championing of Islam, perceiving Muslims as an oppressed group,



instead of rejecting the ideology as being problematic, unscientific, and prone to creating social unrest. Weisbord (1937) in *The Conquest of Power* explains the deviation from dialectical materialism quite well, explaining the divergent idealistic view in the context of right-wing religious fundamentalism:

*“Stripping aside theosophical aspects, both religion and metaphysical idealism agree, contrary to the materialists, that things are but a collection of images, matter is only the realization of an idea. It is the idea, the spirit, that is primary and real, and nature is but a reflection of the spirit.”<sup>1</sup>*

## Mikhail Bakunin

*“I am a fanatic lover of liberty, considering it as the unique condition under which intelligence, dignity and human happiness can develop and grow; not the purely formal liberty conceded, measured out and regulated by the State, an eternal lie which in reality represents nothing more than the privilege of some founded on the slavery of the rest; not the individualistic, egoistic, shabby, and fictitious liberty extolled by the School of J. J. Rousseau and other schools of bourgeois liberalism, which considers the would-be rights of all men, represented by the State which limits the rights of each – an idea that leads inevitably to the reduction of the rights of each to zero. No, I mean the kind of liberty that is worthy of the name, liberty that consists in the full development of all the material, intellectual and moral powers that are latent in each person; liberty that recognizes no restrictions other than those determined by the laws of our own individual nature, which cannot properly be regarded as restrictions since these laws are not imposed by any outside legislator beside or above us, but are immanent and inherent, forming the very basis of our material, intellectual and moral being.”*

As we proceed, contradictions in ideological framework among the Antifa commoners will emerge, with individuals championing individuals associated with socialism and anarchism historically yet failing to realize the divergence of each ideologue’s actions and philosophy. Bakunin ascribes to the left libertarian, not state authoritarian, approach to implementing plans for a new society. In this section, we will compare and contrast Bakunin, focusing on the important ideological differences that continue to impact Marxist and anarchist movements to present. While it should be noted that many individuals elevate Bakunin and Marx as a result of emotionality, the views can be reconciled into a meaningful ideology.

Can someone be both a Marxist and a Bakunin-style anarchist simultaneously? Not really. At least not without experiencing significant cognitive dissonance or having to skew certain concepts and attitudes to

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1 Chapter XVII.

maintain congruence. The fundamental split involves perception of the state itself. Marxists believe in a communal state – a people’s state operated for and by the proletariat – with a significant focus on egalitarianism. Do anarchists believe in egalitarianism? It depends on the specific faction of anarchists, but in the individualist form of anarchism, the natural expression of unbridled individuality will necessarily lead to inequity. Bakunin-influenced anarchists believe in an abolition of the state in its entirety. When a capitalist, conservative, corporatist, fascist, or other opposition state emerges, Marxists and Bakunin-style anarchists often form alliances for resistance. However, in many cases of either anarchist or Marxist government systems being implemented, direct opposition ensued. This happened during the Spanish Civil War, where the communists perceived the anarchist-syndicalists as being nearly as much of a threat as the Nationalist alliance and assassinated many key anarchist figures. However, Marx himself did not advocate for a Leninist or Maoist state, so this difference is seemingly more a matter of interpretation and application than root philosophical differences.

Marx and Bakunin are often interpreted as holding vastly varying degrees on individual determinism. Marx is represented as viewing economic factors as holding primacy, while Bakunin focuses on the environment’s propensity to shape individuals. However, a review of each of their writings presents a significantly muddled version of these overly simplistic explanations, given Bakunin often stated that Germans and Jews were authoritarians – implying biological determinism – while Marx wrote many works of political philosophy discussing how other factors – not just economic interactions – influence an individual’s development.

Bakunin is one of the early anarchists, expounding upon Proudhon and European labor movement ideas. His anti-Semitic and racially-charged comments are controversial in politically-correct society of modern times, with Bakunin’s prejudice commonly being deconstructed by intersectional feminists and other leftist scholars. His views on anarchism and individualism – at least the commonly-stated interpretations of his views – continue to influence movements including Antifa.

## **Pre-Soviet Russia**

An adequate discussion of the rise of the Soviet Union, the competing pre-USSR political ideologies, and its positive and negative impacts on modern-day Antifa would encompass an entire volume of this book series. Given the purpose of this book series – to provide a holistic overview of the Antifa movement – a brief discussion of the most

important information will be included in this discussion. This necessarily means certain information will be omitted, or generalizations will be made, that fail to fully encompass Marxism-Leninism. I suggest consulting primary and secondary sources for further information.

The rise of the Soviet Union was the result of national and international economic and cultural factors related to the shift from an agrarian to industrialize society. In 1861, the Russian Empire abolished serfdom. This provided an opportunity for Russian peasants to organize. Populist uprisings were common, albeit rather sparse and ineffective. In the late nineteenth century, Russia's period of industrialization began, creating mass relocation of peasants from rural to urban areas. This resulted in overcrowding. The harsh conditions and low wages in factories increased feelings of social alienation between the elites and peasant classes. Conditions of economic despotism, alienation of societal groups, and ongoing wars – starting with the Crimean War in 1854 – facilitates the creation of sufficient societal unrest and resultant possibility for successful revolution.

Prior to the development of the Soviet Union, the nation-state of Russia was a monarchy ruled by the House of Romanov for over four centuries. Occasional, albeit relatively rare and unsuccessful, attempts at assassination occurred throughout the reign of the Romanovs. However, in the mid-to-late 1800s, politically-dissident academics observed the horrific conditions of the urban dwelling laborers and began mounting assassination attempts on the Czar. Working conditions continued to be atrocious, despite the abolition of serfdom by Czar Alexander II in 1861. The first successful attack occurred as a result of a bombing staged by members of the revolutionary group “People’s Will” in 1881, which resulted in the death of Czar Alexander II.

### **People’s Will**

The People’s Will is a revolutionary group of a revolutionary socialist political-leaning, which sought to combat the oppressive regime of the Romanovs. The People’s Will was officially founded in 1879, serving as a predecessor to the Bolsheviks. It is important to briefly note the economic and political reforms of Czar Alexander II, given their importance in revolutionary action: Alexander II provided landlords with an upfront sum for land in an attempt to eliminate serfdom, providing the serfs with land to be repaid to the landlords over subsequent payments. The land was overvalued at nearly twice its actual value, having the end result of creating debt slaves out of the former serfs.

In the mid-1800s, the revolutionary group “Land and Liberty” sought social and political change, consisting mostly of academics claiming to be fighting for reform to benefit the peasantry. Land and Liberty proved largely ineffective, and a disagreement over utilization of terrorism resulted in the creation of two separate factions: the People’s Will, who supported the utilization of violence and engaged in a “by any means necessary” approach, and Black Repartition, who opposed terrorism against the central authority. It should be noted that the opposition to violence was less of a position grounded firmly in ethics than a tactical decision:

*“Firmly convinced that only the people themselves could carry out a socialist revolution and that terror directed at the centre of the state (such as the People’s Will advocated) would bring – at best – only a wishy-washy constitution which would in turn strengthen the Russian Bourgeoisie.”<sup>1</sup>*

Despite the presence of a vocal opposition consisting of Elizabeth Kovalskaia and others of the Black Repartition, plans for an assassination of Czar Alexander II continued. Many historians, including Joel Carmichael, believe the existence of the People’s Will, despite their rhetoric being focused on defending the proletariat, was solely for the purpose of carrying out this assassination. A bombing in St. Petersburg on March 13, 1881 was successful in assassinating the czar, elevating Alexander III to the position of czar. Shortly afterwards,

A previous attack on Czar Alexander II’s train resulted in injury and prompt arrest of the conspirators. Andrei Zhelyabov, Sophia Perovskaya, Nikolai Kibalchic, Nikolai Rysakov, and Timofei Mikhailov were arrested, swiftly convicted and sentenced, and publicly hung. Others were arrested or fled, leading to the disbandment of the People’s Will in the early 1880s.

Initially created by the populist movement led by the Russian Narodniks, the **separate path theory** states that Russia could shift from feudalism to socialism without need of a transitory capitalism phase, through a revolution by the peasantry class.

### **Post-Assassination & Bolshevik Rise**

Multiple attempts at reorganizing the People’s Will failed. Despite this, surviving members of the People’s Will aided the creation of future revolutionary groups. In this section, we will provide a brief overview of the battles against the monarchy through the Bolshevik Revolution.

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<sup>1</sup> Quote from October 1879 by Elizabeth Kovalskaia.

Following the assassination of Alexander II, Alexander III became the czar. Czar Alexander III reversed many of the liberal policies of his father and set forth mandates requiring teaching of Russian language in schools, imposition of a single national religion, and through the May Laws of 1882, banned Jews from inhabiting rural areas and restricting occupational choices. The zemstvos – local administrative bodies – had their previously-held authority mostly revoked. These oppressive policies reignited revolutionary direct action, including a discovered plot to assassinate the czar in 1887. Narodnaya Volya led this plot, and five conspirators – including Vladimir Lenin's brother Alexander Ulyanov – were executed by hanging on May 8<sup>th</sup>, 1887. Revolutionary activity continued, with the famine of 1891 to 1892 further contributing to dissent against the czar. Alexander III died in 1894 – from nephritis, not assassination. His son, Nicholas II, took over leadership. Behind the scenes, various radical groups and opportunists continued to recruit and plan for the eventual revolution. However, for the decade of 1895 to 1904, revolutionary action was mostly localized, with very few direct attacks on the czar.

Despite a lack of notable assassination attempts or populace uprisings, the decade covering 1895 to the event of Bloody Sunday was hardly negligible in the timeline leading to Bolshevik Revolution. Czar Nicholas II defended the status quo, maligning political opposition of a social democratic or Marxist nature. In early 1898, a plethora of Marxist and Marxist-sympathetic organizations met in Minsk, forming the Social Democratic Labour Party (SDLP). Membership included the well-known figures Leon Trotsky, Vladimir Lenin, and Joseph Stalin, as well as numerous lesser-known figures advocating for varying forms of social democratic governance. To suppress the SDLP, its leadership and a significant portion of its membership were forced into exile.

From exile, Lenin, Plechanov, Sasulich, Axelrod, Martov, and Ptorev formed the *Iskra*, a journal for revolutionary-minded Marxists and social democrats. Published from exile, this journal was disseminated throughout several European cities and eventually reached the Russian populace via friendly agents. Within this organization, rivaling factions began to form, with Lenin and Plechanov often sparring.

A frequent misconception of Lenin and the platform of other Marxists, especially of this time period, is that of Marxism being the platform of the impoverished. However, the poorest of the poor – the peasantry class – were perceived as reactionary – incapable of meaningful participation in a revolution. In response, Catherine Breshkovskaya, Victor Chernov, Gregory Gershuni, Alexander Kerensky, and Evno Azef formed a rival organization to the SDLP: the Party of Social

Revolutionaries (SR). Formed in 1901, it rejected the Marxist distinction between peasants and the proletariat. SR sought forced confiscation and redistribution of all land, to be redistributed according to need. Proposals less radical – at least per the zeitgeist of modern-day Western society – included a restriction of no more than eight hours per work day for factory workers and a general assembly elected by the populace.

Lacking any notable military achievement, Czar Nicholas II was provided with a potential opportunity to showcase his ability to command, as well as expand the Russian empire, in the Russo-Japanese War. This conflict was likely triggered as a result of expansion into Manchuria and Korea, threatening the interests of the Empire of Japan. In response to aggressive Russian expansion, the Japanese Imperial Navy attacked a Russian fleet at Port Arthur on February 8<sup>th</sup>, 1904. Despite forcing eventual retreat, the loss of ships and lives on the side of the Russians proved to be a rather disastrous start to the conflict. The Russian people, especially individuals in border areas (i.e. Finland, Poland, the Caucasus region), protested the war. In less than two years, the Treaty of Portsmouth was signed. Areas including Korea, Manchuria, and southern portion of the island of Sakhalin were officially designated to Japan. This war further established Japan as an up-and-coming imperial power, tarnished the legacy of Czar Nicholas II, and facilitated growing unrest amongst the populace against the autocracy.

Growing unrest among less revolutionary types seeking social reform influenced Father Georgi Gapon to create the Assembly of Russian Workers of St. Petersburg. At its peak, membership neared ten-thousand workers, with small assemblies present in most of the large factories of Russia. On January 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1905, a group of protesters numbering in the thousands seeking to deliver a petition for reform descended upon the Winter Palace. This petition requested an eight-hour workday limit, medical aid for factory workers, the right to unionize, higher wages for women workers (a relative afterthought which required persistent objection on the part of women members of the assembly for inclusion), elected assemblies, freedom of speech, press, association, and religion, and an end to the war with Japan. The response by the Cossacks was violent, leading to decapitations of women and children, and the deaths of hundreds of workers in total. Soldiers machine-gunned mostly unarmed strikers, leaving pools of blood in the snowy streets, strewn with the bodies of nonviolent reformists.

In response to Bloody Sunday, Czar Nicholas II promised reforms. Obsessed with the care of his only son, he appeared to be politically blind to the social and economic situation his populace faced. Nicholas II's October Manifesto granted freedom of conscience, speech,

meeting, and association, prohibited imprisonment without trial, and stated no law shall be imposed without the approval of the State Duma. The revolutionaries rejected this, given the stated goal was an abolition of the monarchy, not mild reformist policy. These mild reforms lasted less than two years, when Czar Nicholas II repealed the changes, providing the example of Lenin's rhetoric from exile as being the reason for his decision. Continued unrest and apparent blindness to social issues continued through World War I.

Czar Nicholas II was provided a potential opportunity to avenge his former military failures and followed the advice of his foreign minister, entering World War I on the side of the allies. The Czar's wife, Alexandra, relied heavily on Rasputin, a folk healer whose treatment of the potential future heir's hemophilia elevated him to a position of significant power. While serving on the war front, Rasputin gained significant power and control over the affairs of Russia, to the chagrin of other Romanovs, political leaders, and the public-at-large. As Russia's army experienced repeated defeats on the war front and supplies were woefully inadequate, desertions became commonplace. A lack of faith in the rule of Nicholas II, coupled with growing unrest among both previous supporters of the czar and revolutionaries, led to the eventual collapse. A provisional government gained control over Russia, which was subsequently defeated by the Bolsheviks. While in hiding, Czar Nicholas II, The Czarina, his child, and others were murdered.

## **Leninism**

In the previous section, a brief overview of the majority of a century of Russian struggles was presented. In spite of its brevity, hopefully it proves adequate in its mission of illuminating the key factors resulting in initial, and to a lesser-extent continued, popular support of what became the totalitarian state of the Soviet Union. We will begin this section with a discussion of Lenin's actions and expressed points of view, proceed to a discussion of how Leninism was carried out under Joseph Stalin, and complete the discussion with an overview of modern-day positions held mostly in common amongst Leninist-Marxists.

An understanding of Leninism requires coverage of two diametrically-opposed sets of political ideas: a set of populist Marxist principles and the actualization of Lenin after attaining power. A present-day analogy would be the campaign rhetoric often espoused by Republican or Democratic presidential candidates while campaigning in their primaries and the actualization of policy (see economic policy and foreign policy of American presidents Ronald Reagan, George H.W.

Bush, Bill Clinton, George W. Bush, Barack Obama, and most-recently at the time of writing: Donald Trump – hardly any significant difference between policy and action, only differences of rhetoric).

### April Theses

After returning to Russia in April 1917, Lenin believed the provisional government and communism could not indefinitely coexist. Observing how the proletariat could be weaponized against the elite, Lenin sought their support through the April Theses, which more-than-adequately covered each of the main areas of dissent by the Russian populace. First, Lenin denounced the war, on the basis that it violated to uphold three conditions:

1. “That power pass to the proletariat and the poorest sections of the peasants aligned with the proletariat”
2. “That all annexations be renounced in deed and not in word”
3. “That a complete break be effected in actual fact with all capitalist interests”<sup>1</sup>

The second point focuses on Russia currently being the “freest of all the belligerent countries in the world”, while simultaneously possessing “insufficient class-consciousness and organisation” and “unreasoning trust in the government of capitalists, those worst enemies of peace and socialism.”<sup>1</sup> This relates to conditions three through five which require ensuring the proletariat is aware that the only possible option for attainment of peace and prosperity is Lenin’s party, not the provisional government, a parliamentary system, or any rivaling socialist groups.

Proclamations six, seven, and eight focus on land seizure and redistribution, nationalization of banks, and places the limit of not introducing “socialism” immediately – only socializing production and distribution of products. This document closes with a list of party tasks and advises for the creation of a new International.

From property and wealth redistribution to a disdain for capitalism and parliamentary procedure and including a fundamental distrust in the Russian peasantry to act in their best interest for the sake of socialism, Lenin’s platform prior to attaining state power was aligned with views of the classical Marx framework. However, Marx and other historical Marxists did not ascribe higher status to the Soviet-style system,

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1 V. Lenin. Published in *Pravda* No. 26, April 7<sup>th</sup>, 1917.

1 I.b.i.d.



nor denigrate the alternative socialist platforms as being implausible or detrimental.

### **Lenin in Power**

Lenin's reign began rather predictably, with the Social Revolutionaries – who were inclusive of the peasants in their definition of the proletariat – having popular support over the Bolsheviks. Given the massive political opposition and continued civil unrest, Lenin oversaw elections for a constituent assembly. The Bolsheviks barely acquired one-quarter of available seats, while the Social Revolutionaries were voted into almost half of the available seats. Instead of accepting the election results, Lenin dissolved the assembly, set up soviets throughout the country in an attempt to reduce the significance of the Social Revolutionaries counterpart – the zemstvos – and by the end of May 1918, expelled all opposition to the Bolsheviks from the Central Executive Committee. According to Leon Trotsky, while he was still a Bolshevik, “We have trampled underfoot the principles of democracy for the sake of the loftier principles of social revolution.”<sup>1</sup>

Many refused to capitulate to Lenin and the Bolsheviks, including the Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries. After uprisings and a failed assassination attempt of Lenin, the “Red Terror” was unleashed, presided over by the CHEKA. Nearly one-quarter of a million political opponents were murdered by the time of Lenin's death in the mid-1920s.

Lenin fulfilled the promise of ending the war, albeit on terms generally disagreeable to the general populace and even fellow Bolsheviks. The Treaty of Brest-Litovsk resulted in Russia ceding nearly one million square kilometers including eighty percent of coal mines and thirty percent of the Russian population. Ratification required threats of Lenin resigning, and even then, the vote only passed by one. Taking advantage of civil unrest, Britain, France, and the United States all backed factions of the White Army, which at one point took control over most of Russia. However, the White Army and its allies were defeated by the spring of 1920.

Lenin's implementation of socialism was far from the romanticized utopia often propagated by Bolshevik-sympathizers. After gaining a firm control over society, he abolished the workers councils, espoused a belief in a disciplined workforce subservient to a single leader, reconstructed czarist elements for social control, and continued to express the orthodox Marxist position that the proletariat revolution must begin

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<sup>1</sup> Tarr, 2006.

in an advanced state, such as Germany, given that less sophisticated people like the Russians were unable to attain the full actualization of a socialist utopia.

## Leon Trotsky & Trotskyism

*“Trotsky was so much an intellectual that in the final analysis, Marxism was not quite enough for him.”<sup>1</sup>*

Trotsky’s life is full of seeming contradictions, and the historical record is more falsehoods and slander than factual statements and honest analysis. The focus of this section will be not on Trotsky’s agreements with Lenin, but what made his philosophy unique and his influence on modern-day militant movements.

The late Trotsky and modern Trotskyists tend to place high importance on the theory of permanent revolution, believing that revolution must be an uninterrupted procession from capitalism to socialism, carried out by the proletariat. This was opposed to Lenin, and subsequently Stalin and Mao, who supported the Two Stage Theory, which states two distinct revolutions must occur – one of a bourgeois social democratic nature, and when the populace is ready, a socialist revolution.

Despite being allied with, and even supporting Lenin through the Red Terror, he eventually changed his stance on the Soviet Union, believing Stalin’s socialist state was just autocratic capitalism being replaced by another form of the same beast.

One key strategy advocated by Leon Trotsky that continues to be utilized is the practice of entryism. Entryism involves masquerading as a member of a mainstream “left” party – typically one that is social democratic in nature – in order to advance a militant socialist agenda. According to British Labour Party deputy leader Tom Watson, Trotsky entryists are infiltrating the party to sway opinion in the direction of Jeremy Corbyn. A similar claim was levied against Bernie Sanders in the United States. Neither claim has been substantiated, except for the occasional self-proclaimed radical who expresses overlapping support for both revolutionary figures and left-wing social democratic programs, and the accusations of mainstream party members who have political incentive to malign the popular candidate.

Two main Trotskyist organizations are still functional: the Freedom Socialist Party and Socialist Alternative. The Freedom Socialist

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<sup>1</sup> Quote by Christopher Hitchens. In *Love, Poverty, and War: Journeys and Essays*.

Party is a revolutionary socialist feminist organization. According to the Freedom Socialist Party's website:

*"We are a revolutionary, socialist feminist organization, dedicated to the replacement of capitalist rule by a genuine workers' democracy that will guarantee full economic, social, political, and legal equality to women, people of color, LGBTQ folks, and all who are exploited, oppressed, and repelled by the profit system and its offshoot – imperialism."*

Their platform focuses on alternative energy sources, climate change action, and working-class issues, including previous campaigns for free twenty-four hour childcare. This organization is also in favor of open borders.

Socialist Alternative has a seemingly less radical approach and platform than the aforementioned group, focusing on the "fight for \$15" – \$15 per hour minimum wage, a withdrawal of military entities from foreign countries, police corruption and excessive use of force, and shares an interest common amongst nearly all groups of the modern socialist variety: equal rights for women, LGBTQ, people of color, and other organizations. Socialist Alternative was successful in electing Kshama Sawant to Seattle City Council in 2013, a major feat for a party outside of the mainstream and alternative mainstream political sphere.

## Frankfurt School

*“Having broken its pledge to be as one with reality or at the point of realization, philosophy is obliged ruthlessly to criticize itself.”<sup>1</sup>*

The Frankfurt school is a social and intellectual movement seeking to delve more deeply into philosophical and sociopolitical issues than previous movements. At its core, the Frankfurt school is antibourgeois and an enemy of philistinism and recognizes issues with pure reason and empiricism of the post-Enlightenment period. While accepting Marx in spirit, his ideas were perceived as being too simplistic, too shallow, and the obsession with materialism as being problematic. The student and academia population involved in the Antifa movement, the Frankfurt school and other post-modernist philosophers, coupled with the spirit of Marx and an amalgamation of other ideas of the nineteenth- and twentieth-century Left, have had a significant influence on expressed reasons for action and for proposed constructions of a better society.

The Frankfurt school was founded by four key figures: Walter Benjamin, Theodor W. Adorno, Max Horkheimer, and Herbert Marcuse. To varying degrees, each of these figures will be discussed later in this chapter. To perceive the umbrella of figures and ideas classified under the umbrella term “the Frankfurt school” as a singular entity is misguided, given the divisions present in its earliest manifestations. In 1921, the Akademie der Arbeit (“Academy of Work” was founded. Subsequently, the Institut für Sozialforschung (“Institute of Social Research”) was founded by Carl Grünberg and others. A “new thinking” variety of this movement was present in the Freie Jüdische Lehrhaus (“Free Jewish School”) with its most notable early member being Franz Rosenzweig. Despite the divisions, the Frankfurt school movement shared three linked themes:

1. “Negotiation of the ‘end of philosophy’ and the understanding of the role of the critique of ‘German Idealism’ in its ending”
2. “The understanding of modern individuality and its significance for philosophy”
3. “The question of whether to locate alterity or the non-identical”<sup>2</sup>

Frankfurt School philosophy focuses on four main crises: of modernity, of arts and culture, of the human psyche, and of history. Regardless of one’s own philosophical position on any of these domains

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1 Freidman, 1981, p. 207 – Quoted from Adorno’s *Negative Dialectics*, p. 3.

2 Caygill, 2005; Freidman, 1981.

of society, it is unlikely one would fail to acknowledge that each domain has, at very least, problematic aspects. Technology, especially smart phones and social media, have impacted the daily lives of ordinary working-class individuals. Art and culture continues to evolve, or in the opinion of many – devolve, with specific characteristics of past traditions and cultural practices being represented to lesser degree in lieu of other competing ideas.

The human brain continues to be a Pandora's box, despite significant advances in the biological sciences and related disciplines. And, the history presented at public schools, at least in the United States, is a form of hyper-nationalistic history of the bourgeois, with the occasional “radical” teacher who decides upon a different approach (i.e. utilizing the texts of Howard Zinn and others). History education at the K-12 level, and to a lesser extent during undergraduate studies at university, is seemingly either apologetic to the crimes of the bourgeois elites of previous generations or is radically anti-American to the point of becoming dishonest propaganda. Whether or not the Frankfurt School impeded or expanded knowledge towards resolutions to the aforementioned crises is up to others to decide; the recognition of the crises and problematic aspects of previous philosophical frameworks deserves recognition, nonetheless.

### **The Frankfurt School Toolkit**

Prior to delving into the specifics of individuals and ideas associated with the Frankfurt School, and their subsequent impact on radical movements including Antifa, a discussion of the basic toolkit is necessary. One would not approach a roofing project without tools. Similarly, one should not approach fundamental philosophical issues without having a useful, coherent, and appropriate set of tools for analysis. The basic toolkit will be explained through the three main solutions of the Frankfurt School: the exegetical, the political, and the transfiguration of being.

The exegetical solution provides the basic tool set which is most apparently recognized as being a part of Frankfurt school and postmodernist philosophy. This is where critical theory emerges, with the task of Post-Modernism presiding “over the expulsion of philosophy from the world, so that it can be cleansed and purified for its earthly resurrection and transcendence”.<sup>1</sup> The task of philosophy is deemed to be textual exegesis and criticism – critical explanation of analysis of a text. This is accomplished by identifying the opposition between appearance

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1 Freidman, 1981, p. 208-9.

and reality and demonstration of the intellectual and historical significance of the thinker for the subsequent dehistoricization of the object. Instead of promoting basic facts about the life of the philosopher and elevating their status mostly on the basis of the opinion of previous academics and followers, the goal is to demonstrate what is worth learning from the philosopher and how those ideas can be integrated into a general theoretical critique of existence. This may be accomplished through utilization of a competing framework (i.e. “a feminist critique”) or through a blank slate approach.

The political solution seeks to address fundamental issues relating to mass society and the state, focusing on the seemingly extreme difficulty necessary to encourage the oppressed to take action. This expands upon Marxist philosophy, which focused on immature material conditions, and seeks to address the problem as being fundamentally associated with immature consciousness. The “New Left” was often critically analyzed and deemed to be implicit totalitarianism, producing new forms of social control resulting in a “society without opposition”.<sup>1</sup> According to Marcuse:

*“The new left consists of political groups that are situated to the left of traditional communist parties; they do not yet possess any new organizational forms, are without a mass base and are isolated from the working class, especially in the United States. The strong libertarian, anti-authoritarian movements that originally defined the New Left have vanished in the meantime or yielded to a new ‘group-authoritarianism’”.*<sup>2</sup>

Critical analysis of sociopolitical systems extends to everything from social democracy to national socialism, to constitutional libertarianism to authoritarian communism.

The ***crisis of modernity*** focuses on post-Nazi Germany human rights as related to societal and technological changes. A central focus of this is discussed in Pollock (1985): the transformation of private capitalism to state capitalism. This transformation is readily apparent in nations such as the United States, where excessive bureaucracy and regulations impede the ability for the “free market” to adjust itself based on its “natural laws”. However, if the state were to openly express its desire to implement authoritarian controls over the free market, it would be readily rejected by society. Instead, it is marketed as a form of socialism, to alleviate economic concerns of the oppressed populations with the most minimal impact on the working- and middle-classes. This has been proven to be false, although many still recognize the state as

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1 Friedman, 1981, p. 227 – From Marcuse’s *Repressive Tolerance* (1965); Marcuse, 2005.

2 Marcuse, 2005.

being a source of eternal good, despite occasionally expressing malevolent thoughts regarding the current elected president. Essentially, the free market is stripped of its natural control in lieu of state-managed direct controls, higher strata businessmen, politicians, and other officials gain increasing control over the economic conditions of the people, and eventually, a class of elites emerges with domination over the general citizenry. Implementing policy and acting in relatively insignificant stages over a prolonged period, covering multiple generations, coupled with state propaganda, will help ensure the populace resists very little, at least not at or above a critical threshold, and the people will act in such a manner as to oppress their fellow citizens for the state, without the state even directly imposing this action. Technological advances may provide benefit to society but also possess the fundamental capability of increasing the disproportionate power held by the elites. Technology may be used for spying on citizens, military applications, social control and propagandizing efforts, and other malevolent purposes. Through the critical analysis of the crisis of modernity, which was demonstrated to a rather limited degree above, is a core function of critical theory.

For brevity's sake, the other three crises will not be discussed in detail. However, critical theory focuses on the emancipation of humanity from enslavement, liberation, and a world which empowers humanity. It is critical of historical materialism and views society as being more than a summation of its politics, economics, and culture. Critical Theory, at least historically, viewed the human psyche from a Freudo-Marxist framework, including discussions of the psychic structure of society.

## **Post-Modernism, Neo-Marxism, & Related Movements**

In the third volume of this series, we will cover postmodernism, neo-Marxism, and related ideas in more detail. However, the ideas discussed in this chapter provide a sufficient foundation to understand the varying influences to the present day movement. I do recommend Stephen Hicks book *Explaining Postmodernism* if someone desires in detail coverage of this topic prior to the release of the third volume.

## American Socialism

The “American Socialist Movement”, which for the purpose of this discussion will also include those who are not technically socialists (i.e. anarchists, progressive trade unionists, liberal reformers, etc.), has been a major influence on protest movements within the United States. This general movement traces its native historical roots to immigrants of the 1850s who were mostly of German-origin and were fleeing after failed revolutions throughout Europe. Within the Antifa movement, it is still quite common to find individuals who are either unionized workers themselves or provide significant support for unionized labor.

The earliest radicals fell under two general branches, with a third branch emerging in the 1880s. The branches were the Lassalleans and Marxians. The Lassalleans traced their philosophical roots to Ferdinand Lassalle, a German social democratic reformer, and focused on immediate economic reform through trade unionism, while the Marxians were based in Marxist theory, focusing on long-term political change through revolutionary action. The Lassalleans typically perceived the Marxians as being too radical, or even in some cases as being snobbish intellectuals, while the Marxians frequently perceived the Lassalleans as lacking commitment, focus, and firm grounding in philosophy.

In the 1880s, a former German Social Democrat named Johann Most, after serving a prison sentence in Germany, immigrated to the United States. Most organized his first strike as a twelve-year-old, organizing his classmates against an especially hated teacher<sup>1</sup>. As a young adult, he organized a labor strike as a journeyman book binder, resulting in his blacklisting from the profession throughout Germany. He served briefly in the German Reichstag as a Deputy of the Social Democratic Party, subsequently spending a few years in prison before immigrating to America. He was one of the earliest proponents of Bakunin’s philosophy, which was uncompromisingly anti-state, focusing on voluntary exchange, philosophy of the deed, and other aspects of early anarchism. The influence of Bakunin, or at least claimed influence and reverence of Bakunin, is still present in modern-day anarchic social movements in America.

Early socialism, while being primarily atheistic, was not solely atheistic. Many protestant reverends gave sermons on the sin of capitalism and the potential salvation through socialism. Some reverends went as far as to claim Jesus Christ was Himself a socialist, as evidenced by his focus

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<sup>1</sup> This resulted in Most being expelled from school. Sourced from Draper (1963)’s *The Roots of American Communism*, page 13.



on the community and negative stance on accumulation of wealth (capital) to the detriment of the community as a whole. Christian socialist and anarchist movements, while still present, are rather irrelevant to the modern Antifa movement. The few followers of Abrahamic religions within the Antifa movement are mostly of the “independent practitioner” variety, abstaining from church service to practice Christianity or other religions in an ad hoc, personally-selective approach.

As time progressed, the socialist movements declined in prominence, especially during the period of McCarthyism, where many of these groups were maligned as being enemies to the state. However, for many members of the Antifa movement, socialism continues to be a primary political goal to strive towards. Trade unionism, even for the non-socialists, also continues to be a focal point of the Antifa movement. However, support for trade unionism and socialism typically occurs outside of the typical reported clash with the opposition. The degree of direct action to advance socialism and trade unionism varies amongst groups and individuals under the Antifa movement umbrella, with many individuals having membership in more than one group.

## Recommended Readings

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Robert Graham's *Anarchism: A Documentary History of Libertarian Ideas, Volume One: From Anarchy to Anarchism (300 CE to 1939)* (2005). Black Rose Media Books.

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George Woodcock's *Anarchism: A History of Libertarian Ideas & Movements*

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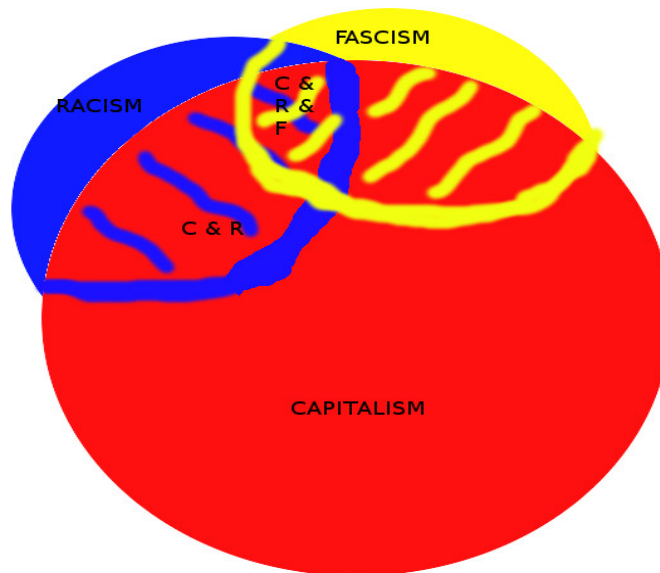


# Chapter III – Philosophy of Antifa

## Introduction

The philosophy of the Antifa movement derives from multiple sources and given the influx of Antifa followers in a post-Trump America, the mostly anarchist ideology has been overshadowed by authoritarian socialist and militant progressive ideologies. The goal of this chapter is to provide differentiation between factions within the Antifa movement and provide an overview of current philosophical debates and positions within the Antifa movement.

The basic philosophy of Antifa focuses on a battle between three basic forces: fascism, racism, and capitalism – all three which are interrelated according to Antifa. This is the ***enemy triad***. An easy way to remember this triad, at least for those who are politically aware, is by the abbreviation ***C.F.R.***<sup>1</sup>, which is also the initialization of the Council of Foreign Relations, a think tank which acts in direct opposition to many of the proposed values and solutions of the anti-fascist movement and its affiliates and allies.



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1 Capitalism, Racism, & Fascism. The enemy triad for Antifas.

## **Anarchist vs. Statist Anti-Fascists**

As a social movement, Antifa's involvement has varied depending on social contexts, with a relatively stable core of anarchists and left libertarians. In specific periods, including former American President George W. Bush's invasion of Iraq, the anti-World Trade Organization rallies, and most recently, opposition to the Trump election, individuals of other political philosophies have joined the movement. These individuals are most frequently considered to be “leftists”. The exact left orientation varies, with authoritarian communists, state socialists, progressives, greens, left liberals, mainstream liberals, and others joining events in the Black Bloc or as allies in anti-fascist, anti-racist rallies. The core positions of Antifa, while not universally agreed upon through traditional hierarchical organization and voting, are as follows: anti-fascism, anti-racism, and anti-capitalism. All three are related, with fascism being considered the final expression or stage of capitalism, capitalism being a means to oppress, and racism being an oppressive mechanism related to fascism. Despite having instances of working together as allies, conflicts emerge amongst the anarchic and liberal fascists, which can also be divided into the anarchist and statist anti-fascists.

### **Liberal Anti-Fascists**

The so-called Trump Derangement Syndrome that emerged following his election influenced many Hillary Clinton supporters, mainstream liberals, Democratic Party supporters, left-liberals, progressives (including many of the Bernie Sanders supporters), and other non-revolutionary statist leftists to support causes more radical than typically expected of these groups, up-to-and-including Black Bloc participation and other aggressive resistance tactics. The liberal anti-fascists and anarchist anti-fascists differed on two important political ideals: liberals did not reject the state – only Trump and other politicians (typically Republicans, who did not share their political beliefs), and many liberals believe in reformation of the current capitalist system, not its complete abolition. Black Bloc support at protests was co-opted by mainstream media platforms, including CNN, as evidence of civil unrest resulting from Donald Trump and his “dog whistling” to racists and fascists. The anarchist core of Antifa continues to despise the mainstream media, recognizing it as an apparatus of the state and multinational corporations; liberal anti-fascists are more open to accepting mainstream news platforms, as long as the platforms aren't Fox News, Breitbart, or other platforms of a “right-wing” perspective.

Jackson (2017) demonstrates the difference between the anarchist core of Antifa and the liberal anti-fascists. Jackson states, “There are many ways to be an anti-fascist without having to resort to violence.”<sup>1</sup> He continues this discussion throughout the article. While not denying the potential usefulness of militant anti-fascism, he states that it can “often be counter-productive”.<sup>2</sup> Noam Chomsky, a self-described anarcho-syndicalist who has often spoke favorably of certain statist policies, described Antifa as a “major gift to the right”.<sup>3</sup> In an interview, Mark Bray, a Dartmouth history professor, summarizes Antifa as a group of “self-described revolutionaries.. who are way outside the traditional conservative-liberal spectrum.” He continues, “They have no allegiance to liberal democracy, which they believe has failed the marginalized communities they're defending.”<sup>4</sup> Antifa arises rather organically in opposition to local neo-reactionary groups, the DNC and RNC every four years during presidential nominations (regardless of candidate choices), and in opposition to threats to the worker, typically in the form of World Trade Organization (WTO) and similar secretive meetings. The political system desired by liberals within the anti-fascist movement contradict those held by the revolutionary core, frequently leading to long-standing Antifa affiliates utilizing the assistance on a short-term basis, but not for long-term planning.

Some well-known liberals recognize the political differences between the Antifa core and mainstream liberals and progressives, including Alan Dershowitz who stated, “Do not glorify the violent people who are now tearing down the statues. Many of these people, not all of them, many of these people are trying to tear down America.”<sup>2</sup> Some liberals share this opinion, recognizing the ideological split between Antifa and mainstream progressivism. Does this mean that liberals absolutely cannot assist the Antifa core? In cases such as trying to prevent a neo-Nazi march through a city, the assistance is welcomed. However, it is important for liberals to keep in mind that the Antifa movement is not necessarily fighting for the same outcome. Given the right set of circumstances, including a complete removal of all individuals with far-right political ideologies leaving standard conservatives and right libertarians, the mainstream conservatives and progressives would likely

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1 Jackson, 2017.

2 I.b.i.d.

3 Oppenheim, 2017.

4 Illing, 2017.

5 Meckler, 2017.

be equal – or at least relatively equal – opponents to the Antifa movement's revolutionary base.

### **Authoritarian Socialists**

Authoritarian socialists and communists, the form of communists and socialists who advocate for central planning directed by a central authority, include many individuals willing to engage in radical revolutionary action, including direct action involving violence. Similar to the liberals – albeit typically a bit more experienced in violent resistance – the state-socialists are welcomed in events against local reactionary clubs. This revolutionary faction of the Antifa movement is willing to engage in violence against a broader set of individuals than other groups within the movement, who tend to focus on violent reactionaries and the police. In more than one case, this has harmed public perception of Antifa<sup>1</sup> and led to injury of individuals who would not have been attacked prior to the Trump inauguration, despite these individuals not changing their tactics or beliefs.

For various factions of the Antifa movement, the following question arises for many Antifa members: “Who counts as being a supporter of the state's tyranny and oppression, and who is simply a citizen who can be won over for the cause?”. Does a patriotic pro-Trump deserve the attention? For many in Antifa, the answer is yes, given the crude rhetoric of Trump regarding certain classes of immigrants, as well as the pro-Trump crowd including some individuals with clearly-stated white identarian opinions. How a collective decides who should be a target will be discussed later in this book series. For the remainder of the section, we will discuss controversial events involving the authoritarian communist / socialist faction of Antifa.

### **Functional Categories of Anarchists**

Modern-day anarchists are classifiable by philosophical influences and ideological similarities. However, to the general public, as well as to organizers, the specific ideological differences and philosophical influences are typically not all that important. Exceptions to this claim exist, with national anarchism, anarchist-capitalists, and the bulk of “left-wing” anarchists falling into competitive camps, with a plurality of

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<sup>1</sup> The mainstream media, as well as many alternative outlets, provide unfavorable reports regarding the Antifa movement. Even if the Antifa movement had no videotaped events which can easily be spun as harmful to society, the public perception would likely either be ignorant to the group, or negative, given the core membership of the group wanting a society different than what the mainstream media and others benefit from.

anarchists failing to recognize national anarchists or anarchist-capitalists as even technically adhering to anarchist principles. When assessing social movements, the actual functionality of anarchism, not its underlying ideology, is frequently more important in explaining why certain approaches are utilized.

The mainstream and alternative media, despite expressing disagreement in analysis, typically cover *insurrectionary anarchism*, a form of revolutionary anarchism which rejects socially-approved forms of peaceful protest; instead, targeted vandalism, violence, and general rioting, frequently through use of the Black Bloc, is utilized to expose the corruption and hegemony of the authoritarian state. When law enforcement suppresses a protest following Black Bloc actions, the act of suppression is provided as further evidence of the police state and the problem with authoritarian statism and its relation to capital. The Black Bloc doubles as a security force for other protesters, creating a situation where arrested protesters are frequently “de-arrested”, and occasionally builds enough momentum within a protest where a police line can be broken or forced into retreat. The Black Bloc and other acts of insurrection are frequently denigrated by other protesters, including fellow anarchists. One anarchist stated:

*“I am no longer lending my support to these acts if they are not solidly rooted in an organizational and movement-wide foundation, supported by large numbers of people who understand their purpose and the steps to take afterwards. If we are “stepping it up” or “escalating” without the massive numbers of people that we were previously standing with, we are losing people, and are thus destined to fail. I don’t want to be in a people-less movement, I want to build strong movements that can take bold and seemingly dangerous steps together, growing as they move forward. This can justify the risk.”<sup>1</sup>*

Mixed opinions on utilization of political violence, especially of the spontaneous sort, creates opposition to Antifa within the anarchist movement. It should be noted that numerous Antifa affiliates allow for one to participate within the specific group without participating in the Black Bloc.

Numerous conservatives, Republicans, white identitarian groups, and other groups deemed “right-wing” frequently categorize Antifa within the same general umbrella as Democrats – a general “leftist” umbrella. However, most anarchists, including those within the Antifa movement, distance themselves from progressives, liberal Democrats, neo-liberals,

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1 I.b.i.d.

and other left-wing political ideologies. The dividing line creates a categorization adopted by many anarchists: *post-leftism*.

The resistance against authoritarianism, which currently has been shifted to anti-Trumpism for many activists, has created multiple factions within Antifa, to be discussed in more detail later in this book. Two general ideologies, one focused on autonomy and the other focused on authoritarianism, create fundamental ideological clashes. According to Kerl (2010) and others within the anarchist community, this creates an ideological clash which cannot be bridged by shared militancy. However, for the time being, new recruits to Antifa affiliates are able to set aside ideology and visionary differences to organize against a common enemy. The following quote exemplifies post-leftism:

*“We could give a fuck about the War or Hillary or Obama. None of this changes \$6.50 plus tips, our rotting teeth, or all our combined STDs. We want conflict, we want the heads of those whiny little pundits on all TV stations. We want doctors tied up in the basement. We want erect nipples and just a fair amount of blood. Yeah, and roses too.”<sup>1</sup>*

Despite insurrectionary actions, a significant portion of new Antifa recruits are social activists – involved in a social movement to advocate for social justice and change. A multitude of intersecting political ideologies collide for the purpose of a common social cause – in the case of Antifa and Antira, the fight against fascism and racism. Uri Gordon, an Israeli anarchist, explains this modern trend in social activism as follows:

*“[T]he mainsprings of today’s anarchism can be found in the intersection of several trends of social criticism and struggle whose beginnings were never consciously “anarchist”—in particular the cross-issue formulations of radical ecology, the waves of militant feminism, black and queer liberation movements, and the anti-neoliberal internationalism launched by movements in the global South, most celebrated of which are the Mexican Zapatistas.”<sup>2</sup>*

The increase in influence of non-anarchist ideologies has shifted Antifa from a predominantly anti-state, revolutionary anarchist movement to a more-inclusive movement with a plurality of political ideologies. The focus on functional participatory democracy, at the expense of individualism and autonomy, is a recent shift within the anarchist and anarchist-influenced movements. Many traditional anarchists reject utilization of a consensus, given it allows a majority to exert control over a minority. According to Murray Bookchin:

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1 Kerl, 2010. Original source is from the *Institute for Experimental Freedom* journal – article: “Politics is Not a Banana”.

2 Gordon, 2008, p. 37.

*“Functioning on the basis of consensus assures that important decision-making will either be manipulated by a minority or collapse completely. And the decisions that are made will embody the lowest common denominator of views and constitute the least creative level of agreement.. the tyranny of structurelessness that consensus decision-making produced permitted a well-organized few to control the unwieldy, deinstitutionalized, and largely disorganized many within the movement.”<sup>2</sup>*

How to structure decision-making within a society in a fair and just manner, which respects equity, continues to be a difficult process under debate within society. The individualist, autonomous anarchists tend to reject social movement groups, and if they choose to participate, participate in such a manner where autonomy is retained.

The post-Marxist, post-Kropotkin divide between anarchists and communists, who share common enemies, have created communists of anarcho-communists, and groups with individuals of anarchist and communist ideologies who engage in militant action for battling a common enemy. The traditional focus of anarchism was abolition of the state, so every individual could be free. However, in movements such as Antifa, many anarchists have adopted aspects of Marxism, including a focus on class struggle. Claims to be representing the worker are common, albeit becoming less common in favor of banners expressing a desire for equality. If the movement becomes more successful, successful to the point where changes in societal structure and function can be implemented on a significant scale, the anarchists and non-anarchists (communists, socialists, syndicalists, etc.) will likely factionalize, lessening the overall force of the movement.

## **Economics of Anti-Fascist Activism**

The basic economic model of supply and demand applies to participation in activist movements, including Antifa. One primary factor correlated with demand for anti-fascists is the supply of fascism and racism. Fascism and racism manifest in the perceived number and combined power of fascists and general societal attitude – perceived, not necessarily actual – regarding groups deemed oppressed by Antifa affiliates and allies. Secondary factors include willing sponsors and organizers of affiliates and propaganda from social justice organizations and the media. For anarchistic and socialistic elements, the perceived oppression from capitalism is an influencing factor on demand. However, this element is mostly irrelevant for progressive anti-fascists.

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<sup>2</sup> Bookchin, 1995.

When the supply of anti-fascists increases, the supply of counter-forces increases. These countering forces may lack any fascist or racist attitudes or behaviors – at least none of significance to the impartial observer – but nonetheless, these counter-forces are lumped into the general opponent category, increasing the perceived number and power of fascists. When the umbrella of opponents broadens, numerous instances of collateral damage occur. Needing to increase supply of anti-fascists, the umbrella of acceptable allies increases, including activists with neutral or generally positive views of capitalism.

Despite the actual number of white supremacists and other neo-fascists being on the decline since the late 1990s and early 2000s, with groups such as National Alliance devolving from a neo-fascist powerhouse with a multi-million-dollar compound to extinction in the early 2010s, the number of anti-fascists has increased. Without an increase in the number of neo-fascists, an outside catalyst is necessary. On the surface, this catalyst would seemingly be Donald Trump. However, given the previous quotes where Trump, Clinton, Obama, and others are deemed equivalents in a fascist structure, this answer is not satisfactory.

An analysis of the catalyst(s) requires an analysis of the pertinent facts. It should be observed that specific Antifa affiliates have been allowed to act with free reign in certain cities, despite a National Guard presence. The National Guard is under the control of President Trump. Why would the National Guard allow a rather unpopular group act with relative impunity? The simplest explanation would be a balance between optics – mass arrest of what would be portrayed as peaceful protesters on many mainstream media outlets would reflect negatively on the administration – and Antifa being deemed of relatively low threat status. It is possible that, given sufficient time, the opinion of the bulk of progressives will shift towards complete rejection of Antifa. At that point-in-time, declaring the movement as a terrorist organization, connected sufficiently through common names and points of unity, and arresting specific key organizers may be a tactic utilized to tame the movement.

It is clear that the catalyst is of an anti-Trump, anti-nationalist source – likely pro-globalist in nature. Similar to how the Occupy Wall Street movement had indirect funding from globalist organizations, it is likely that indirect funding of certain affiliates and allies within the movement are tied to globalist entities. George Soros and others of his caliber have utilized existing groups in sometimes successful, and other times failed, “color” revolutions. These revolutions led to a rise in nationalism, as evidenced in the Ukraine, where nationalist marches occurred, appearing nearly identical to the Tiki torch marches in the United States. Infiltration of existing radical activist groups occurred in



many of these nations, directing their attention to the target desired by Soros and related entities. Do individual groups within these color revolutions receive the infamous “Soros check”? Absolutely not! The funding is always sufficiently distant enough from the actual activist groups on the ground to create the potential for plausible denial.<sup>1</sup>

Dissemination of information throughout the movement focuses on a combination of key websites<sup>2</sup>, college professors, the mainstream media<sup>3</sup>, celebrities<sup>4</sup>, and information from organizations such as the Southern Poverty Law Center<sup>5</sup>. Individuals and/or organizations with sufficient influence over all of these domains have steered the focus of the Antifa movement towards a more anti-Trump, less anti-globalist / anti-corporatist attitude.<sup>6</sup>

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1 The financial management chapter of a subsequent volume will include more information about the web of funding.

2 *It's Going Down* being one that has come under fire from many anarchists and Antifas over the past few years for being a “shill”, as stated by multiple sources within the movement.

3 Observe the positive reaction to Antifa and anarchist blocs during 2016 and 2017, compared to previous years where the movements were deemed violent, silly, and other derogatory terms.

4 Michael Moore and other celebrities supporting #J20Resistance. *It's Going Down* reports on #J20Resistance, which has very little to do with the anarchist or libertarian socialist roots of American Antifa.

5 The SPLC has labeled nearly any group problematic to the government or the general globalist agenda as hate groups on their website, and websites tied tangentially to the Antifa movement subsequently report this information.

6 This will be discussed in more detail in an information chapter.

## **Schisms in Anarchist Movement**

Antifa and the Black Bloc core, at least traditionally in America, is composed of mostly anarchists. However, it is rare to find certain types of anarchists within a Black Bloc, including anarchist-pacifists, anarchist-capitalists, and national anarchists. Antifa and the Black Bloc is typically composed of anarchist-communists, libertarian socialists, and other “left-wing” anarchists. Despite agreeing that the state's monopoly on violence is essentially a human rights violation, the specific idealist societal constructions and philosophical viewpoints create schisms in the anarchist community, resulting in a lack of unity.

### **Non-Aggression Principle (NAP)**

The issue of the “first amendment” is frequently utilized as an argument against the tactical use of the Black Bloc by Antifa. The issue of the first amendment, despite holding importance for many Americans, is irrelevant to Antifa, given the anti-state position held by many members. Numerous Antifa affiliates have expressed no desire for the state to limit speech, rejecting the state as being a mechanism of oppression. The non-aggression principle does hold philosophical importance to many members of the Antifa movement and is simultaneously utilized by anarchist opponents of the Black Bloc to discredit their tactics.

The non-aggression principle (NAP) is a central tenant to libertarian and anarchist-capitalist thought. The NAP asserts any act of initiated force against a person or property is fundamentally a violation to a person's freedom, and as such, must be rejected as immoral. The more-aggressive tactics of the Black Bloc are rejected by certain sects of anarchists as being a violation of the NAP, given the Antifa Black Bloc frequently utilize violence to de-platform others – others who are not initiating physical violence. Is Antifa violating the NAP or actually acting within the bounds of NAP? This depends on how “initiation of force” is defined.

Delving further into the NAP, an equivalence of force is important. Utilizing a firearm against someone who is emotionally hurting people through racial slurs would be a violation, even though the individual utilizing racial slurs was the one who initiated force. Throwing a rock at the person using racial slurs would be a closer equivalence of force. An exact equivalence of force would be discrediting the individual through speech.

If an individual or group is expressing ideas which may lead to targeted violence or emotional harm to an oppressed individual, is the

Black Bloc's response utilizing physical aggression unwarranted based on the NAP? Using the term “oppressed” is likely to shift one's position – who wouldn't stand up for an oppressed person? Viewed from the opposite perspective – that the Richard Spencers, Dr. David Duke, and similar characters are actually defending the “oppressed white people” against the violence of the “far-left” communists – Antifa actually appears to be the oppressive force, creating a situation where certain people are unable to express themselves within society. Word choice alone changes perception of whether or not Antifa is violating the NAP. However, this lacks sufficient depth to determine the potential ethical violation of the NAP by Antifa.

Let's consider the actual statements of collectives within the Antifa movement and compare their explanations and philosophical positions with their actions and assess whether or not the summation of philosophical tenants and resulting actions violate the NAP, and if so, under which circumstances the NAP is violated. One member of Antifa – “William” – stated, “If you think Antifa does wrong by initiating fights at protests, then form a strictly defensive group to resist neo-Nazis.” This adheres to the voluntary participation principle of anarchism, allowing freedom of choice of which tactics are actually defensive or in violation of the NAP. William also stated, “If you feel like the NAP prohibits you from punching a Nazi first, then show up with your group and only fight the Nazis when they start shit.” If two groups show up, both willing to utilize force against each other, and the “Nazi” group utilizes violence first in the form of hand-to-hand combat, responding with hand-to-hand combat would not be a violation of the NAP. However, William does not reject Antifa's utilization of physical force without an initial physical aggression against the group. William is just one of many Black Bloc'ers. However, William states the historic violent actions of neo-fascist groups is an initiation of force, and as such, utilization of physical force to de-platform members of the group, even if it is not the same exact members who initiated violence previously, is acceptable under the NAP.

This brings into question individualism versus collectivism and how each relates to the NAP. Perceiving the world in terms of distinct individuals – to an extreme to illustrate a point – a specific individual would need to utilize force against another specific person for the latter person to respond with force. Otherwise, the NAP would be violated. However, utilizing a purely collectivist world-view, if a member of a neo-Nazi group committed an act of violence against a member of an oppressed class, any member of that oppressed class or its allies may respond with physical force without violating the NAP.

The collectivist view brings into question temporality – can anyone who claims to be defending the oppressed use physical violence against any group utilizing Nazi ideology, given the Nazis utilized physical force historically against numerous oppressed groups within Germany. This view likely seems ridiculous, given the delay of over eighty years in responding. However, what if a specific group reacted violently towards an oppressed group five years ago? Is violence in response at present in violation of the NAP? What about a year ago? A month ago? A day ago? The question of temporality, as well as individualism versus collectivism, creates disagreement amongst anarchists regarding how the NAP should be interpreted.

### **Solving Ethical Dilemmas**

How does one resolve the dilemma of the NAP and the Black Bloc? An organized ethical framework can facilitate a greater understanding and provide organization to the ethical dilemma. Fact-gathering is a necessary initial step. These facts must be divided into concrete facts, including specific actions and events that took place, and the more debatable facts, including possible motives and stated intentions of an individual or group and similar information, which leave room for interpretation or debate. Slogans, hypotheses with no evidential support, and bias, must be rejected or, in the case of bias, recognized and ideally reduced.

What are the facts in this ethical dilemma? The Black Bloc is an ad hoc tactical formation which has engaged in physically aggressive acts towards both property and people. Numerous banks and automotive companies received a large-scale bailout from the United States government in late 2000s and early 2010s. The income gap between the rich and poor is increasing. Companies including Monsanto have promoted the use of genetically-modified food crops which lack long-term safety studies and use of pesticides linked to increases in certain forms of cancer. Organizations using neo-fascist rhetoric, ideologies, and symbols are recruiting members. The Black Bloc tactic has been used at anti-capitalist rallies as well as anti-racist rallies. The “Black Bloc” has not requested any specific permits or organized specific rallies under that name or general organizational structure, nor is the Bloc the first to arrive at a demonstration. Specific events, including a 2017 interview of Richard Spencer where a Bloc'er sucker-punches him appear to be situations where violence is initiated by the Black Bloc. However, this punch followed specific instances of Richard Spencer criticizing the group and certain ideologies which do not adhere to his idealized world-view. The Philadelphia police department, Los Angeles police, and others have paid

settlements in response to civil cases where accusations of excessive force against demonstrators, including Black Bloc members, were made. Video, audio, and written testimony, essays, news articles, and other evidence is available but too lengthy to list in its totality. This is by no means a comprehensive list. With a list of facts, it is important to keep in mind the following: “Facts by themselves only tell us what is; they do not tell us what ought to be.”<sup>1</sup>

Possessing a shared understanding and agreement on the factual basis of an ethical dilemma is a necessary precursor to debate. If the opposing sides in an ethical debate disagree on the facts – a situation very common on social media platforms – then arguments typically become arguments over semantics, the validity of the stated facts, and eventually devolve into ad hominem attacks. In this situation, the facts stated by the Chief of Police in a major city will differ from the facts stated by anti-fascists, and yet another set of facts will be presented by reactionary demonstrators. Free market libertarians are likely to present yet another set of facts. It is important to keep in mind that “Socialism is better than capitalism”, “Socialism kills people”, and other statements are not facts. Opinions must be separated from the facts to the highest degree possible.

The *utilitarian approach* to solving ethical dilemmas was first presented in the nineteenth-century by Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mills, suggesting “ethical actions are those that provide the greatest balance of good over evil”.<sup>2</sup> This approach utilizes the following steps:

1. Identify all available courses of action.
2. Identify who benefits and who is harmed by each course of action.
3. Choose course of action with greatest benefit and least harm.

The *rights approach* is based on the philosophy of Immanuel Kant, focusing on individual choice. An individual has the right to choose a course of action, but the course of action should not interfere with another individual's right to choose. The basic rights are categorized as follows:

1. The right to be told the truth and be informed.
2. The right to privacy.
3. The right to not be injured.
4. The right for contractual agreements to be upheld.

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1 Velasquez et al, 2015.

2 I.b.i.d.

The *fairness approach* is an Aristotelean approach to ethics, traced back to the Greek philosopher Aristotle. This approach focuses on the fairness, or justice, of a given course of action. Favoritism and discrimination are specifically noted as unjust and immoral.

The *common-good approach* focuses on courses of action at the macro-level of society. Does the course of action benefit the community as a collective unit? Individual needs are downplayed, given individual needs can interfere with the community-at-large's well-being.

The *virtue approach* focuses on the expression of behavior and character traits which are deemed universally beneficial for society. Courses of action must adhere to certain universal values, including freedom, honesty, fairness, compassion, and integrity. By striving for a virtuous course of action, the outcome is more likely to be beneficial for the future of society.

As you will note from the above, the five general approaches to ethical problem solving may yield different results. To provide a general ethical analysis, attempting to provide relatively equal weight to each side of the debate, the utilization of physical aggression against multinational and capitalist interests will be separated from the battles against reactionary-labeled organizations.

### **Black Bloc Violates NAP**

From the perspective of the anarchists who state the NAP is violated by Black Bloc tactics, especially those tactics where individuals are targeted, it is asserted the rights of others are violated. Violent acts where someone perceived to be, or actually is, a neo-fascist, is attacked first in response to offensive rhetoric, the utilitarian approach would identify physical injury to those with differing beliefs and provide potential alternative courses of action which do not result in others being physically harmed. From the rights approach, axiom number three is violated – the person who is speaking is being responded to with the utilization of physical violence. This is perceived to be unfair, given that actual violence is being utilized to combat rhetoric – the course of action should be commensurate with the identified problem. Is damaging corporate property and engaging violently with the police for the common good of society? Likely not, given it results in even further repressive measures when anti-demonstration legislation is implemented and an entire demonstration movement is maligned as violent. The utilization of violence in response to rhetoric is perceived as lacking fairness and self-control. If anarchism is to succeed, successful model communities

separate from the state, or at least as separate as possible from the state, should be utilized to advance communitarian, voluntaryist ideas.

Certain anarchist ideals congruent with the U.S. Constitution. Many anarchists believe in principle of freedom of speech. Utilizing the Black Bloc to prevent individuals from entering a speech through violence is perceived as depriving their rights. Attempting to de-platform a controversial speaker through violent means violates the rights of that individual to speak. Rhetoric should be combated with rhetoric.

It should be noted the above positions are generalities, with the actual opinions of anarchists who believe the Black Bloc tactic is being used in violation of the NAP having significant diversity, ranging from pacifists who oppose all violence except certain cases of self-defense, to those who generally approve of the Black Bloc but disagree with the utilization of violence in specific situations. Anarchist-pacifists tend towards believing Antifa violates the NAP. Given the significant anarchist-communist population within Antifa, its natural rival – the anarchist-capitalists (“ancaps”) – tend to object to both collectivism and the utilization of the Black Bloc to suppress speech and free association. The remainder of this section will be utilized to analyze specific quotes from the “Antifa violates NAP” population.

### **Antifa Supports NAP**

*“Anarchists have always paid a lot of attention to feedback loops. Seemingly small actions, small arrangements, small evils tolerated, can rapidly or inexorably build up to systematic and seemingly omnipotent power relations.”<sup>1</sup>*

In order to justify utilization of the aggressive side to the Black Bloc tactic without violating the non-aggression principle, it is necessary to consider the potential future harm that a certain individual or group could cause, if given the opportunity to grow. Consider the example of Adolf Hitler and the NSDAP.

Hitler was imprisoned for nine months following the Beer Hall Putsch. If he had received a sentence more commensurate with the modern-day American legal system, he would have likely served multiple decades before even having a realistic opportunity for parole. Without Hitler, would the NSDAP have risen in Germany? Perhaps. The NSDAP was more than just Hitler. However, Hitler's convincing rhetoric and ability to rally important factions of the German constituency facilitated the rise of the NSDAP. In retrospect, taking action up-to-and-including assassinating Hitler prior to his rise could be justified ethically, given it

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<sup>1</sup> Gillis, 2017.

would benefit a great number of people, harm only him and perhaps cause distress for a few close acquaintances. It would be for the common good of society, to have a society which did not experience the Holocaust or other violent, repressive actions of the Third Reich. Either allowing the Nazi regime to rise to power or assassinating a political figure are difficult to justify from a purely virtuous standpoint. Is committing one murder to prevent millions of other murders a virtuous act? A difficult question to answer from purely a philosophical standpoint, but a seemingly simple question to answer from common sense. Having foreknowledge and committing this act could be considered a form of justice – a form of vigilante justice, but justice nonetheless.

The Antifa movement is not condoning murder, at least not on any large-scale officially adopted platform. “By any means necessary” is a popularized phrase utilized by some anti-fascists, but does not literally mean any means necessary. Mass genocide of the human race would end fascism – obviously this would not be a tactic to be used. Many anti-fascists who support the Black Bloc and believe it is ethically justified utilize a communitarian, not individualist, approach to analyzing ethical dilemmas.

The police state and its big brother military-industrial complex are murderous machines, leading to mass genocide around the world in support of multinational corporations and protectionism of elitist interests. The actions of Antifa, by comparison, are relatively minor. The worst case scenario is misguided aggression towards a wrong target, which is immensely less of a threat to freedom than imperialistic national policies. “Some punchy 'SJWs' would be an annoyance... is completely put to pale by any increase in the power of the police state.”<sup>1</sup> From the perspective of anti-fascists, this is a battle between the people and the oppressive police state, with supporters of oppressive totalitarianism (including neo-fascists) being perceived as the aggressor because of the actions of the group. Reducing or limiting the power of the police state is for society's common good. The violent actions are perceived as a necessary, typically last resort, course of action for ensuring the rights of the people are protected. The stated purpose of the action provides evidence for virtuousness, given it shows compassion for the oppressed and courage with the willingness to fight against powerful forces. Also, the NAP is not violated because the police state initiated force against the people and the response is commensurate.

The goal is to effect change without violence, and when violence is utilized, for the harm to human life to be minimized. Anti-fascists who

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1 Gillis, 2017.



have committed violent actions without any reasoning or provocation have been removed from Antifa affiliates throughout its existence. Consider the case of Jessica Nocero and Jennifer Gaddy, who will be discussed later in this book series. Both attempted insurrections, offered guns and body armor, and engaged in reckless behavior, just to name a few violations of the implicit anti-fascist code of conduct. The Nashville Anti-Racist Action, Cleveland Antifa, and others promptly posted bulletins warning others to avoid contact with these individuals.<sup>1</sup>

Finally, Antifa does not require participation in the Black Bloc or any aggressive action. “If you think the thing Antifa does wrong is sometimes ‘initiate’ fights at protests – then form a strictly defensive group to resist neo-Nazis”, stated one anti-fascist named William G. He continued, “If you feel like the NAP prohibits you from punching Nazis first, then show up with your group and only fight them when they start shit.”<sup>2</sup> This illustrates the difficulty in assessing whether or not an entire social movement or group adheres to a specific ethical principle. Given collectives within the Antifa movement have likely acted in violation of the NAP. Individuals within the movement do not adhere to the NAP and will proudly proclaim that eradication of Nazis supersedes non-aggression ethical constructs. The Antifa movement is lax on the implementation of specific methods. Painting Antifa with a broad brush may be en vogue amongst the pro-Trump, patriot, and reactionary movements. However, a case-by-case analysis of specific events is necessary to fully understand adherence to specific ethical principles of the individuals and groups who compose the movement.

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1 Nashville ARA, 2017.

2 From Twitter user “William G.”, who requested no additional information be provided due to speaking under condition of anonymity.

## Free Speech Issue

*“We can all agree that cutting the telegraph wires of fascist generals coordinating an invasion would violate their personal “free speech” but it is also an action clearly justified insofar as it saves the free speech of millions they plan to subjugate. To truly defend free speech on the whole we must sometimes deny it to its murderous enemies. To defend the ideal of a richly interconnected world where information flows freely takes more than speech, it requires action against those brutally organizing against it.”<sup>1</sup>*

The intersection between protecting free speech and protecting a community against violent actions creates ethical dilemmas. If a modern-day Adolf Hitler were to emerge, rallying a paramilitarized force that brutally attacked minorities, would it be ethical to prevent modern-day Hitler from speaking? A free speech absolutist may argue that freedom of speech is necessary under all conditions. However, yelling fire in a crowded theater, creating a mass panic and potential injury, is forbidden speech. Incitement of violence has been deemed separate from freedom of speech – it is illegal to engage in rhetoric which clearly intends to create mass chaos or provoke violent acts against others. Colluding with others for the purpose of criminal activities is also deemed to not be protected speech. Should speech always be protected, and if not, what is the boundary? Is responding to rhetoric with violence ethical?

The Antifa movement is most widely known for appearing at locations where a controversial speaker has an engagement, a controversial group is planning to organize, or in places where globalist groups deemed harmful to the proletariat are planning to meet. While in opposition to the imposed methods, most people would not argue against the protesting of groups such as the World Trade Organization, the G20 summit, and similar meetings. The polarization of opinion emerges in the first two cases: controversial speakers and controversial groups. In this section, the arguments set forth by selected Antifa members will be discussed, with the goal of explaining how Antifa members believe to be upholding the value of freedom of speech while simultaneously seeking to de-platform those who are deemed a threat to society.

The constitutionalist and conservatives frequently criticize the actions of Antifa as being dangerous – a threat to the freedom and liberty of all Americans – and also advocate for “Antifa” to be labeled a terrorist organization.<sup>2</sup> While the violent actions are the most commonly cited reason for wanting the social movement's affiliated groups labeled as

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1 Gillis, 2017.

2 Herfurth, 2017. Posobiec, 2017.

terrorist organizations, the perceived threat to free speech and expression is often stated as the most serious concern.

According to a pamphlet promoted by crimethinc.com and itsgoingdown.org, the issue-at-hand is not freedom of speech because the far-right groups do not want actual dialogue. “They aim to spread paranoia to escalate the ongoing violence against marginalized people. The issue is not 'free speech' but whether we let them recruit for violent attacks.”<sup>1</sup> Certain targets, including Milo Yiannapolis, Gavin McInnes, and Ben Shapiro, do not associate with reactionary groups, nor do they defend these groups.

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<sup>1</sup> *Antifascism is Self-Defense* pamphlet.

## **Second Amendment / Gun Rights**

The false depiction of the left-right political spectral divide fails once again when discussing the issue of the right to bear arms. Discussing this issue with respect to the Antifa movement also requires separating out the issue- or person-based Antifas, typically of a progressive-liberal ideological system, and the long-term Antifas, who typically are of a revolutionary socialist or anarchist ideology. The progressive-liberal faction, who is mostly involved for the purpose of resisting Trump, typically views gun control as a net positive. However, for the purpose of discussing this issue within the movement, we will be discussing the typical view of the revolutionary faction.

Carrying out a revolution against the state requires more than just aggressively-stated ideas, rocks and flagpoles, and relatively ineffective weapons during war. The revolutionary socialists and anarchists within Antifa reject the state, either the current state (the former) or the idea of a state in its entirety (the latter). The constitution, including the second amendment is meaningless. However, weaponry, including guns ranging from handguns to automatic, high capacity guns with large magazine, are deemed an integral part of preparing for a revolution.

As noted in numerous YouTube videos, including a series of videos by Anarchist Spectral, the Antifa movement is currently preparing through firearm training. Other military tactics are being taught and trained within the movement. The previously mentioned personality presents the case that progressives, liberals, and other “leftists” should not support gun control, given that guns will be necessary for overthrowing a fascist regime.

It should be noted that despite being a loosely organized social movement of various groups and individuals, Antifas are training in a relatively organized fashion when it comes to training with firearms. In Arizona, a cameraman filmed a group of Antifas marching in the streets in an organized fashion. Temporary rank and duty designations are common as well, for the purpose of engaging in specific tactical assaults. This does not necessarily give any specific individual or group of individuals higher authority outside of the specific event. However, for the purpose of increasing efficacy, the temporary designations are used to denote who is responsible for certain tasks. Otherwise, if no structure or hierarchical structure were available for tactical assaults, the assaults would quickly degrade into chaos. Remember: Anarchy is not chaos and disorder. Anarchy is opposition to the state in any form.

If successful in toppling the current state, the militant factions, equipped with firearms, would likely break down into opposing factions. At least two factions, the statist and anti-statist, would likely fight over which system to implement. Or, a treaty may be imposed, providing certain land for the anarchists and the remainder for the revolutionary statist. Given historical analogues, this creates an opening for an opportunist authoritarian to assume control over the revolutionary statist faction. If history repeats itself, the anarchists would be exiled, imprisoned, or murdered.

## Popper's Paradox of Intolerance

*"Unlimited tolerance must lead to the disappearance of tolerance. If we extend unlimited tolerance even to those who are intolerant, if we are not prepared to defend a tolerant society against the onslaught of the intolerant, then the tolerant will be destroyed, and tolerance with them. — In this formulation, I do not imply, for instance, that we should always suppress the utterance of intolerant philosophies; as long as we can counter them by rational argument and keep them in check by public opinion, suppression would certainly be unwise. But we should claim the right to suppress them if necessary even by force; for it may easily turn out that they are not prepared to meet us on the level of rational argument, but begin by denouncing all argument; they may forbid their followers to listen to rational argument, because it is deceptive, and teach them to answer arguments by the use of their fists or pistols. We should, therefore, claim, in the name of tolerance, the right not to tolerate the intolerant."*<sup>1</sup>

The philosophical and practice question at the center of discussion is whether or not tolerating intolerance is necessary to maintain a tolerant society, or if tolerating intolerance will necessarily weaken and/or destroy a tolerant society. Antifa's position is intolerance must be directly attacked, by any means necessary. Antifa affiliates specifically state that the state should not be involved – the community will address fascist and racist groups and expel them.

Some activists express a desire for hate speech legislation or social programs to address hate speech. Other activists want those with racist and fascist views brought out into the open, so they can be openly protested, and the better – typically liberal --- ideas will prevail. The mainstream media slant is seemingly one in support of hate speech legislation and censorship, with many multinational corporations and governmental agencies either following suit, or encouraging this view.

This issue is directly related to the issue of free speech. In a society where an individual or group is permitted to express any idea, regardless of how controversial it may be, it follows that at least some portion of society will express unpopular views. These unpopular views evolve over time, ideally with any truth contained within the unpopular ideas merging with or overriding problematic or false popular ideas. The ultimate goal is recognized as elusive – absolute truth – but is an ideal worth striving for. With suppression of unpopular views, any truths within will be suppressed as well, impairing society's quest for discovery of truth.

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<sup>1</sup> Popper, 2013.

Unpopular views deemed worthy of severe punishment at the specific time in history include models of the universe where the Earth was not the center – the heliocentric<sup>1</sup> model especially. The pathogen model of disease was unpopular at the time of first emergence. Political ideas, including sovereignty, freedom, abolition of slavery, worker's rights, women's rights, equal rights for non-whites, and others were all unpopular upon first emergence. Even at present, all of these now popular views have dissenters, albeit these dissenters are given very little credibility (i.e. the flat-earth proponents, racial separatists, supporters of authoritarian governments, etc).

Antifas are not simply attacking unpopular views – they are not attacking flat-earthers, non—Abrahamic Satanists, etc. Antifas are attacking expression of ideas deemed to be fascist, racist, or related to the oppressive nature of capitalism.<sup>2</sup> Attacks on capitalism include anti-WTO, anti-WB, and pro-union rallies, which were a more significant portion of the movement in the late 1990s and early 2000s. Present-day rallies focus mostly on those deemed racist or otherwise prejudicial.

What is deemed fascist or racist speech, or violent organizing for advancing racism and fascism? Antifa had a present at a Milo Yiannapolis event at University of California at Berkeley, a character who is a social critic and satirist. It would be difficult to categorize Milo as being a neo-Nazi, especially given those groups despise his Jewish heritage and homosexuality. He does make satirical comments, deemed offensive by some, regarding social justice warriors, transgenderism, and other groups within society he deems problematic.

Another person frequently attacked – Ben Shapiro – is an orthodox Jew, with political views aligning more with modern libertarianism of a centrist variety, stating he would hire a transgendered individual if being transgendered does not affect work performance. He does, however, express a belief that transgenderism is a result of mental illness, likely of a variety related to body dysmorphia or gender identity disorder diagnoses of the past.

Styxhexenhammer666 and Sargon of Akkad, two social commentators with significant followings on YouTube, have also been classified under the fascist / racist category, despite both holding socially liberal – in the classical sense – values; both hold a “live and let live”

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1 Heliocentric = sun-centered. This model placed the sun, not the Earth, at the center of the universe.

2 Capitalism in this context is typically referred to as “crony capitalism” by proponents of capitalism.

attitude towards transgenderism and related issues, and with respect to race, Styx is/was married to a non-white individual and Sargon frequently trolls neo-Nazis and white identarian with gay porn and other content on social media.

All four of these individuals have been deemed *gatekeepers of Nazism*, apparently being an initial access point into the white world of Nazism, and analogous to the gateway drug theory, exposure to these individuals leads one to seek “harder” content, eventually leading one to full-blown Nazi content. The actual relationship between any of these four individuals with actual neo-Nazis is at least one degree of separation, through an interview with someone who is connected to someone who expresses white identarian, white supremacist, or other racially-charged, Euro-centric content.

Not all Antifas consider any of these four individuals to be especially problematic. For individuals more universally agreed to be problematic, it requires delving further into “right-wing” content, an umbrella which encompasses groups which ideologically differ to such a degree where progressives and liberals actually have in common with many of these groups than these groups have in common amongst themselves.

To discover racially-charged content, a simple search for “race realism” or “white identarianism” will produce more than adequate results. American Renaissance and the National Policy Institute, organizations with a focus on racial issues primarily affecting whites, are two organizations tied to white identarianism. The original source of the term “Alt-Right” is Richard Spencer, a white identarian who was the central figure in the “punch a Nazi” campaign. None of these individuals or organizations are specifically calling for violence – they are expressing beliefs deemed offensive regarding racial differences. It would be difficult to demonstrate how the specific actions of Richard Spencer are physically harming non-whites. The argument is that his ideas influence others to commit violence against others, and his exact speech is emotionally damaging to others.

Moving further into the extremes of the right-wing umbrella, further into the extremes of white identarianism into separatism and supremacists, numerous groups exist, including the National Socialist Movement, the Ku Klux Klan, Aryan Nations, National Vanguard, and others. Many groups within this umbrella call for separate ethno-states, with the extreme fringes actually calling for violence and preparation for “RaHoWa”.<sup>1</sup> Criminal elements are common within some groups within

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<sup>1</sup> Racial Holy War.



these movements, acquiring funds through drug trafficking and sales, pornography, and other illicit activities. It would be difficult to argue that any of these groups are tolerant, especially given many of these groups are planning for a racially-based conflict. These groups are frequently denounced by not only Antifas and progressives, but also libertarians, conservatives, and others. In some instances, the specific calls for violence cross the boundary of constitutionally-protected free speech into the territory of conspiracy to commit a crime or a call to violence, which are not specifically protected under the First Amendment. Many individuals within these groups come specifically prepared for conflict at rallies, creating feelings of ill-will from other right-wing groups and free speech advocates.

Given the significant difference between the so-called “gatekeepers” and supremacist groups, it is more challenging than a simple “Nazis” versus “Good Guys” scenario. In a tolerant society, where should the cut-off be where free speech is protected and valued, yet intolerant views are suppressed in an appropriate fashion? Is peaceful protest through use of banners and chants adequate? Is organized debate where the racial separatists' ideas can be directly challenged adequate? Or is violence, either by the community or by the state, the answer to the question? Is violence from racial supremacist groups in the community better, worse, or the same than violence from the state? All of these questions are complex, with the answers differing depending on one's specific values, political orientation, and other factors.

If an individual or organization is threatening violence upon another within the community, the community must stand up against the instigator of violence. However, when it comes to words and non-violent action, where must the line be drawn and what action(s) should be taken when that line is crossed? This is the essence of the paradox of tolerance. Any society of significant size will include intolerant elements, no matter how tolerant the majority is. Suppressing intolerant groups will be viewed as intolerant by some; ignoring intolerance may lead to a rise in influence by intolerant elements.<sup>1</sup>

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1 Perhaps this will be a subject for a full-length text in the future – the paradox of tolerance and how to organize against intolerance in a manner which preserves tolerance.

## Patriotism vs. Nationalism

Patriotism and nationalism are two terms intertwined, despite being significantly different. Both terms are frequently used incorrectly or in the wrong context, with patriotism being maligned with pro-interventionist, pro-military views, and nationalism being maligned with supremacist groups. A discussion of these two terms will hopefully clarify the meaning of each, and the potential problem(s) with each.

Patriotism refers to a love for one's country – the actual physical environment contained within its borders, the citizenry, and the culture. Patriotism is not tied to a specific political ideology, nor is it blind obedience and support for the government. In fact, patriots may challenge the status quo by protest or even revolution. As Sobran (2001) stated:

*“Patriotism is like family love. You love your family just for being your family, not for being “the greatest family on earth” (whatever that might mean) or for being “better” than other families. You don't feel threatened when other people love their families the same way. On the contrary, you respect their love, and you take comfort in knowing they respect yours. You don't feel your family is enhanced by feuding with other families.”<sup>1</sup>*

Despite not being a universally agreed upon definition for patriotism, it relays a certain sentiment typically applicable to patriotism, regardless of the specific nation or group. Exceptionalism, believing one group is special and different compared to another, may or may not be present in patriotism. However, the patriot, even if he or she believes that his or her country is the greatest and special, recognizes that others likely feel the same way about their own nation.

Nationalism is a term which is typically perceived in negative light, especially in the post-Trump election period in the United States. Nationalism is not necessarily a negative –the strong sense of unification and collective membership may be necessary for a certain group to unite for a “good” common purpose (i.e. a national revolution which frees a nation from a despotic leader or outside imperial power). Nationalism assumes nearly all of the characteristics of patriotism and takes certain characteristics to extremes. Nationalists tend to have a romanticized abstraction of what it means to be a member of the rigidly defined nation, culture, religion, race, or another group. Enemies are frequently defined, either of the actual or only perceived type, and unifying against the commonly-defined enemies is necessary for the longevity of the nationality. Nationalists are more likely to be militant. Examples of

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<sup>1</sup> Sobran, 2017.

extreme nationalism include Mussolini's Italy, Hitler's Nazi Germany, Stalin's U.S.S.R., the Wilsonian idea of being an American, etc. Other nationalistic movements include Black liberation movements (i.e. Black Panthers, Black Lives Matter, etc.), the American Indian Movement, Islamicist groups, and white nationalist groups). Identitarianism, separatism, or supremacism are strongly correlated ideas – especially identitarianism, which is seemingly a necessary prerequisite for nationalism. Otherwise, it would be difficult to actually define who is a member of a specific nationalistic group.

Patriotism is typically good and is almost always well-intentioned, given that even when the leader of the nation or other group is acting unethically, the patriot will place the people over the government and act accordingly. Nationalism, while a potential benefit during times of war or extreme despair, may be blinded by allegiance to the specific group to the point of following orders even when those orders are detrimental to an outside group or is contrary to previously-stated in-group values.

Nationalism and patriotism are both applicable to the classical Marxist class struggle, albeit with divergent interpretations. Patriots are both diverse and focused on the group in which they are fighting for: diverse in the sense that it transcends gender and biological sex, racial and ethnic history, specific religious beliefs, etc., but focused in the sense that it applies to a patriot's fellow countrymen. A patriot is not agnostic to religion and culture, recognizing that specific values and ethics transcend the traditional categorizations utilized to create competing factions. A patriot challenges the state when its policies and practices endanger his or her fellow countrymen. American Patriots most commonly stand by the U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights as unifying documents. Liberty, justice, freedom, equality of access, and economic freedom are unifying values per American patriots. The American people are perceived as a class analogous to the proletariat, regardless of specific income or position, while multinational corporations and people in positions of power acting against American values are perceived as analogous to the bourgeois class of Marxism.

Conservative militiamen and libertarian socialists share a general sense of the opposition class and even agree that militant tactics may be necessary to protect the citizenry. However, the point of divergence is differential ideological frameworks and the perceived role of capital as a corrupting force. The “crony capitalism” of the constitutionalist conservatives and the “capitalism” of the libertarian socialists are essentially the same: one faction perceives pure, uncorrupted capitalism as a general good, while the other perceives capitalism in-and-of itself as the problem.

To some nationalists, the Constitution and Bill of Rights are insufficient, or are interpreted in a rather obscure manner to justify a specific interpretation of what it means to be American. To the Christian nationalist, the Constitution and Bill of Rights are documents supporting the United States as being a Christian nation. To white nationalists, these documents are perceived as being supporting documents for America as being a European nation, founded and created by white people. Slavs, Slovaks, Nordic people, Anglo-Saxons, Germanic peoples, and others are perceived as being “white” while other groups are perceived as non-white. Ethno-states are frequently perceived as being ideal, and in extreme cases, the chant of the coming “Rahowa” (RA-cial HO-ly WA-r) is perceived as a given. Another form of nationalist may cheer on the military even if the military action is unethical and resulting in the unwarranted deaths of foreign civilians and American troops. In every case, a specific, narrow interpretation of “being American” is stated, and all others are deemed a potential threat, with varying degrees of action deemed acceptable to eliminate the threat.

However, nationalism during a time of crisis, or having a nationalist-component as part of a country’s citizenry for preparation in event of crisis, can be pragmatic, commendable, and arguably even necessary. Under the oppressive British crown, the revolutionaries who opted to engage in oratory protest, property destruction, and eventually militarism, were nationalists – nationalists who stood for the autonomy of the people of the thirteen colonies. Factions within the Antifa movement have nationalistic tendencies, with a specific class or group identity being the unifying component.

The class struggle of classical Marxism is modified to fit the specific in- and out-groups. For the religious nationalists, a notion of the Christian<sup>1</sup> “good” battling against non-Christian, liberal “evil” is the class struggle – a class struggle transmogrified into a spiritual struggle<sup>2</sup>. For many white nationalists, substitute “white race” for proletariat and “Zionists” or other perceived threat for the bourgeois class.

During periods of strenuous circumstances, nationalism may unite a people for a potential common good – to preserve a people and its culture against an actual threat. However, the mindset of the nationalist is frequently divisive during peaceful periods, and when a shift towards

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1 Feel free to substitute any religious group in place of Christianity.

2 It must be emphasized that not all religious fundamentalists are necessarily nationalists. It requires a clear definition of a specific group being of higher import and possessing a specific right to the geographical area, and an out-group being necessarily labeled as a threat to be eliminated for the continued existence of the nation.

turbulent, but survivable periods occurs, nationalists arise to provide an explanation.

Separating ethics from racial and religious nationalism and analyzing both from a purely pragmatic framework, how would a group actually construct such a group in the United States? Bloodshed and forcible deportation is an option, albeit one that is unlikely to garner public support. However, an approach to sway public opinion in favor of the nationalist is to malign the opposition group and labeling anyone not adhering to the doctrine of the nationalistic group as being a traitor of sorts, creates a situation of fear and facilitates coercion. The government utilizes similar tactics during times of war, maligning those who oppose the war as being traitorous and un-American. Consider how anti-war activists were treated under the Wilson administration, or Germans and Japanese under FDR, or a more recent occurrence: how the Dixie Chicks were treated after speaking out against President George W. Bush and the Iraq War in 2004.

The challenge for the Antifa movement is to suppress any dangerous ideologies for the purpose of advancing their specific anti-capitalist, anti-fascist, anti-racist, and related political ideologies. Rejecting the standard tools of civil disobedience – placards, chants, etc. – tactics of militancy are utilized. One must ask an important question, though: Who decides whose cultural and political views are acceptable? Unbeknownst to many Antifas, the militant tactics are empowering the state to utilize additional force and pass additional legislation, allowing the bezoar known as the federal government to supersede historical legal constraints.

## Points of Unity

The expressed desire to abolish hierarchical systems of control, discussed in further detail in Volume One, seemingly creates a situation where various factions under the same common banner would, over a period of time, diverge into incoherency. Given the rejection of centralized, authoritarian structure, an alternative has been constructed to ensure unity amongst groups under the “Antifa” banner: points of unity documents. These documents are created by each affiliated group independently, typically published publicly, and accessible by other groups within the federation of Antifa affiliates. A desire to create a unified coalition against fascism and racism leads to each points of unity document sharing similarities, in spite of not having centralized national or international Antifa conferences, nor a centralized authority.

Despite lacking a centralized authority or leadership – outside of possibly having a local-level individual who acts in a leadership role – Antifa affiliates tend to share a rather common “Points of Unity” document, with the specific length and goals varying somewhat. However, nearly all Points of Unity documents include the following:

1. We disrupt fascists & far right organizing and activity.
2. We don't rely on the cops or the courts to do our work for us.
3. We oppose all forms of oppression and exploitation.
4. We hold ourselves accountable personally and collectively to live up to our ideals and values.
5. We not only support each other within the network, but also support people outside the network who we believe have similar aims or principles.<sup>1</sup>

These five principles are seemingly straightforward to the casual observer, and in the case of number two, is straightforward – no utilization of police or courts as an ally. No flagging down a police officer stating, “Help! Arrest that fascist who is promoting violence!” No utilization of the courts or police, or by extension, other structures of the state, for silencing the opposition. For the anarchist- and libertarian-minded individuals within the movement, this principle adheres to one's general political philosophy. What about individuals with more statist political philosophies?

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1 TORCH Antifa.

With progressive liberal elements within the movement, this may create cognitive dissonance. Many, not all, progressive liberals advocate for hate speech laws, anti-discrimination legislation, and related policies directly tied to the courts and police for enforcement. Progressive liberals participating in Black Bloc activities as a part of the Antifa movement may reject police and court involvement at that specific moment, but in another societal role, may advocate for the specific involvement of the courts and police in the battle against fascism, racism, and capitalism. Does this violate principle number four? Seemingly, yes, but this is an issue that does not appear to have emerged on any widely-discussed basis. This is despite the specific individuals observed to be acting in such a seemingly contradictory manner sharing the same social media accounts utilized for communication with the Antifa movement for advocating for policy decisions. This is likely the result of the differing priorities and world-views of affiliate groups within the Antifa movement, with those composed of mostly progressives forgiving such behavior, given it does not violate the general mission of Antifa to suppress fascist elements of society.

What role does the corporate media play within the capitalist structure, and is communicating or supporting the corporate media, even for recruiting or advancing a message, acceptable? On January 9th, 2017, Anchorage Antifa posted support of Joe Scarborough, a host on MSNBC, for statements made by him in favor of #resistance. Members of Rose City Antifa met with CNN for an interview in 2016 as well. According to Van Deusen & Massot (2010), the corporate media is not the friend of the Black Bloc, given its true allegiance to exploitation, imperialism, and other results of capitalism. However, affiliates such as Anchorage Antifa and Rose City Antifa are apparently willing to set aside the capitalist aspect of the corporate media for advancing the anti-fascist cause. This is yet another consequence of having a rather vague, shared doctrine, where the interpretation amongst the anarchists and progressives within the movement differ significantly.

The decentralized, leaderless structure of the Antifa movement allows for expansion of the Points of Unity for varying groups. Many of these principles are held throughout the movement as implicit rules for engagement. Additions to the core points of unity by Antifa Sacramento include<sup>1</sup>:

- “We support political, social, and ideological diversity, within our movements. Antifa has members of many different backgrounds.”

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<sup>1</sup> Available from <https://antifasac.noblogs.org/points-of-unity/>.

- “We believe in diversity of tactics – fighting fascism requires a multifaceted approach. Ignoring the problem only lets it thrive.”
- “We work to create an aware and active environment that promotes social and political transformation through positive cultural change.”
- “Violence is never our objective. We do support self-defense and the defense of others.”
- “Each person who chooses to do antifascist work chooses their own individual level of involvement with Antifa. We are not a club or a gang, nor do we have leaders.”



## **The Post-Trump Paradigm Shift**

Historically, Antifa has stood in opposition to authoritarian state power, regardless of who is president. Antifa, or at least its direct historical descendants, protested the DNC and RNC for each and every DNC and RNC from 1996 to 2012. The state is oppressive, corporations are thieves, and the political parties are both corrupt, thieving, oppressive corporations. Oddly enough, this sentiment appears lost as of the 2016 elections, if one only watches most alternative media and any mainstream media source. Even the anti-G20 demonstration was turned into an anti-Trump demonstration, per reports from CNN and other mainstream news networks. What would cause a seemingly incomprehensible shift in ideology? Is Donald Trump such an extremist that Antifa decided to rally against him, and through the diversion of resources, indirectly favoring Hillary Clinton, the candidate who received hundreds of millions of dollars in campaign financing from the multinational corporate and banking sector?

The answer would appear to be a resounding yes, at least on the surface. Antifa has been a rather obscure social movement. Membership in Antifa has grown rather slowly since the early 1990s, with greater rate of growth in the late-1990s and early-2000s. A surge in groups identifying as Antifa, Antira, or allied groups increased sharply in the 2010s, especially in the 2014-2016 period. Throughout interviews with Antifa members, those who were long-term members were more likely to be anarchists; newer members were more likely to identify as socialists, with some even identifying as progressive – none of the members interviewed for this book identified as progressive if involved in Antifa or a very closely-related group pre-2010. The Anti-Racist Action affiliates were more likely to include progressives and socialists, yet frequently are classified under the Antifa umbrella, which is historically anarchistic.

Inclusiveness is a double-edged sword, spawning mixed emotions from old-school Antifas. Increasing the number of allies facilitates greater success – strength in numbers as the well-known saying goes. However, the new members, consisting of a significantly higher percentage of non-anarchists, creates a dichotomy of ideology – ideologies which reside in direct opposition to each other. The old school anarchists – many at least – in Antifa do not really care if Bernie Sanders, Hillary Clinton, Donald Trump, Gary Johnson, or Jill Stein would have been elected, given the end result is an authoritarian state of some form. Perhaps the Green Party's anti-imperialism, pro-environment, pro-labor union platform would be considered favorable to a populist, pro-military platform. Yet, in either scenario, the state still exists to oppress the population. In 2000 and 2004,

Ralph Nader conducted presidential campaigns. Despite being favorable to the corporatist two-party candidates, Nader was not supported by any significant portion of the organizations within the Antifa movement<sup>1</sup>. In 1996 through 2016, the Black Bloc was in attendance at both the RNC and DNC. Anti-Racist Action, a comparatively newer umbrella movement, has less historical roots in anarchism than Antifa, and as a result, Anti-Racist Action affiliates were present in significantly higher numbers at the RNC than DNC in 2016.

The popular site It's Going Down focused mostly on Donald Trump essays, all of them portraying Trump in a negative light. Despite being a major source of information across Antifa, a commonly heard complaint in discussions with Antifas was the inherent bias of It's Going Down: “They don't speak for us”, [after sharing a link] “see this story.. this protest is not even organized by us [an anarchist collective in Portland, OR, behind many Antifa / Black Bloc events]”, “they have an agenda” are just three quotes from interviews. More Antifas, even the old-school crowd, seemed to at least view the site as being an ally, than as the enemy. However, the anarchists were more likely to be skeptical of possible hidden motives.

The shift towards more progressive and state-socialist voices in the Antifa movement coincides with a simultaneous radicalization of many typical Democrats. This was especially more common amongst the younger crowd – not many current or former self-identified Democrats over the age of 35 were observed participating in Antifa events, except in the capacity of “cheerleader” – praising their tactics on social media websites. A significantly smaller, although not insignificant, anarchist portion of the Antifa movement has shifted towards allying with statists against Donald Trump. The intersection of these two populations, coupled with the “mainstream-ification” of Antifa, facilitated a paradigm shift amongst a significant portion of the Antifa movement.

The anarchist tradition, complete with an inherent distrust of corporate media, is still strong within the Antifa movement. I believe to some degree of accuracy – albeit not one-hundred percent – that if a group of Antifas are posing for the cameras of a major news network, they are likely new to the movement, are in costume but not actually part of the movement or have other motives than advancing a true anti-authoritarian stateless society.

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1 Knouff, 2017. Original source: *The Black Bloc Papers* by Van Deusen & Massot.

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# **Chapter IV – Radical Activism**

## **Introduction**

Waving placards and writing letters to your elected officials is one form of protest, which has worked rather minimally, lacking any notable wins for the protesters in the past three decades. Some activists have believed for the totality of this period that non-violent methods often fail, while others, out of frustration over the lack of change, have adjusted their approach, leading to an influx in radical activism in America.

## **Types of Activists**

Four major types of activists exist: radicals, idealists, opportunists, and realists. Depending on the degree of authority and attention given to any specific type of activist, the public perception and actual trajectory of the social movement may be changed. While opponents of Antifa frequently argue that the social movement is composed of radicals, this is definitely not the case. Antifa is composed of hundreds of rather autonomous groups, consisting of varying numbers of individuals with varying levels of involvement. It is also important to understand that no activist is purely any specific type of activist, and given varying situations, a radical in one scenario may act as an opportunist in another. Understanding the variety of types of activists involved in social movements facilitates a greater understanding of the trajectory of action and areas of conflict within Antifa.

Realists tend to be the most flexible within a social movement. Realists are willing to make compromises with the enemy, believing that small gains in the right direction, compounded over time, can result in the ultimate end goal. A realist may recognize anarchism as an end goal, but tends to support libertarianism or constitutionalism, believing a reduction in the size and scope of government is a constructive gain. Realists are more likely to utilize legally sanctioned channels for advocacy of policy change, believing the system can be constructively changed without an all-out revolution. Realists may still value voting, believing that if the right people are elected, the people's interests will be upheld. For the opposition, winning over the realists is the second most likely action to be successful, given idealists and radicals are unlikely to concede to the enemy.

The opportunist may or may not have commendable intentions. The intentions are rather irrelevant, given the opportunist's motives are frequently for personal gain. An opportunist may become involved in Antifa as a way to virtue signal to others – to show the public over social media that one is willing to stand up for the rights of the people. Opportunists may also develop organizations for the purpose of gaining power, prestige, or for simply gaining financially. The opportunist is the most dangerous individual to a social movement, given the impure motives underlying participation. Opportunists may be “bought off”, coerced into informant roles, or may simply associate with a group as a way to gain comradeship or access to illicit substances. The 2017 G20 summit in Germany, with the large-scale participation, included individuals who participated for the purpose of partying, gaining free products through the raiding of the Apple store and other corporate entities, or promoting one's own YouTube channel, etc. For the enemy, the opportunist is the most easy to win over. However, acting solely upon self-interest, the opportunist may also betray the enemy if a better offer is provided by another party.

The opportunists and realists compose a significant portion of new recruits in the Donald Trump presidential campaign and subsequent election. Many of these individuals do not stand for the anarchist philosophy of which the core of the Antifa movement is built upon. While willing to fight against racism and the tyranny of the police, these individuals included many Bernie Sanders supporters, a self-described “Democratic Socialist” independent candidate who would have advocated for increased scope of the state – a policy trajectory similar in deplorableness to the military-worship of the Trump administration. If Donald Trump were to be successfully impeached, convicted, and removed from office, and the candidate of which these individuals supported were to assume the presidency, these individuals would likely lose interest in participation. The core of Antifa, however, would continue the fight, given the state would still hold a monopoly on legal use of violence, and regardless of who is in power, this is still an oppressive force. Even the authoritarian socialists within the movement would object, with many believing that a people's revolution is necessary to implement a new government of the people.

The idealist desires an ideal, perfect world. Many idealists lean towards pacifism, limiting involvement in the Black Bloc and certain other aggressive opposition tactics of the Antifa movement. This does not place the idealist in opposition to Antifa – pacifistic opportunists may stand with arms linked to create a human fence, to deny entry of an oppressive group into a certain locale. Idealists tend to have overwhelmingly positive

views of the human populace, rejecting the small ruling elite class as atypical of humanity in general. Idealists are useful to social movements to ensure that a meaningful end goal exists to strive for, even if the specified end goal is idealistic to the point of being unlikely to be implemented in the near future.

The core of the Antifa movement, especially those who willingly engage in the Black Bloc, are radicals. The term radical has been maligned by the mainstream. Radical is frequently used as a pejorative, to malign an individual or group as being extreme, violent, immoral, etc. However, in times of state corruption, the radical anti-statist provides willing opposition. Radicals are willing to take extreme measures, including engaging in physical confrontation with the police, despite risk of arrest and other consequences. Radicals are the most difficult type of activist to influence, given their typically staunchly-held positions. Radicals tend to be apathetic towards the mainstream opinion of their actions, strongly believing that their actions are in the best interest of the group they are representing.

## **Alinsky's Rules for Radicals**

Saul Alinsky is a controversial figure, known for his community organizing tactics which began in Chicago and were subsequently adopted by others. Labeled a communist by some, he claimed to be non-partisan. His book, *Rules for Radicals*, has influenced a variety of public figures, including most notably Hillary Clinton, whose graduate thesis was on the topic of Alinsky, and Barack Obama, known as an up-and-coming community organizer prior to his political career. The questionable actions of some of his followers tarnishes what proves to be effective tactics for organizing, regardless of whether it is for an anarchist, progressive, conservative, or even a reactionary cause.

*Rule #1: Power is not only what you have but what the enemy thinks you have.*

The class-based struggle over power is central to the leftist view of society, finding it necessary to act on behalf of the “Have-Nots” – the Proletariat, the impoverished, homosexuals, gender nonconformists, women, ethnic and racial minorities, and whatever group du jour is determined to be oppressed by the “Haves”. The “Haves” hold the power, and in order for society to change for the betterment of the masses, the Have-Nots must revolt. Revolution, not evolution, is the central tenant. Lack of action and indifference equates to support for the Haves. The ends justify the means, no matter the cost, in opposing the ruling class.

If the ruling class holds the power, how does a social movement, which seemingly lacks power, engage in meaningful opposition? Strength in numbers is a common phrase utilized in direct action organizing. If a single individual stands in opposition of the police, this individual can be arrested easily. If ten people stand in opposition of the police, these individuals can also be arrested, but with less ease than just one. If one thousand individuals stand in opposition of the police, it becomes increasingly more difficult to arrest the group. In this case, it is likely for those in power to call upon the National Guard and additional resources to assert control over the dissenting group. If only one percent of society stands in opposition of the police and ruling elite, the dissenting group would outnumber the police, and could, in theory, assert control and arrest the police themselves, unless the police are willing to fire upon the masses.

What exactly is power? Power is an amorphous, abstract concept. Is it material wealth? Not necessarily, given the sheer number of materially wealthy individuals over the course of history who have been maligned for having dissenting opinions. Does holding a high political office give one power? The election of Donald Trump and the seeming opposition and refusal to implement his stated policies should provide evidence against the view that simply holding political office makes one powerful. According to Saul Alinsky, power is the “ability, whether physical, mental, or moral, to act... Power is the very essence, the dynamo of life. It is the power of the heart pumping blood and sustaining life in the body. It is the power of active citizen participation pulsing upward, providing a unified strength for a common purpose. Power is the essential life force always in operation, either changing the world or the opposing change. Power, or organized energy, may be a man-killing explosive or a life-saving drug. The power of a gun may be used to enforce slavery, or to achieve freedom.”<sup>1</sup> Power is the ability to act without being limited by an outside force.

This is where the Black Bloc tactic, intermingled with other protesters, becomes important. While the Black Bloc is frequently a very small minority of a demonstration, the Bloc willingly places itself in harms way, attempting to de-arrest individuals, and engaging in acts deemed criminal where arrest is evaded due to each Bloc member blending into the larger group of concealed activists. This facilitates a shift in power, at least on an individual event basis, to the demonstrators.

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1 Alinsky, 1971



The remaining tactics can be read from Alinsky's 1971 book, *The Rules for Radicals*, and cover a wide range of tactics, ranging from ways to frame the opposition in such a way that is beneficial to activist group, and using the supposed strengths of the opposition to the advantage of the activist group. I recommend reading Alinsky's work, regardless of one's own political affiliation, given an understanding of this framework of tactics is beneficial for any advocacy group – whether the group is a right-wing Christian conservative group or a far-left socialist group advocating for the rights of LGBTQ+ and racial minority groups.

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## **Chapter V: Continued History (2003 to Present)**

### **Introduction**

In the first volume of this series, I discussed the history of Antifa from its international roots – the Dreyfus Affair – to the Iraq War protests in the U.S. and post-AFA (Anti-Fascist Action) in the United Kingdom. It is necessary to note there's a qualitative difference between the American Antifa movement and various International Antifa movements, despite the movements claiming solidarity under a shared banner. Various factors, including current sociopolitical climate, social climate on university campuses, and unemployment rates all effect the focal point(s) of each nation's Antifa movement. For the purpose of this chapter, we will refrain from discussion of the international-scale and focus specifically on the American case.

Also, a third volume of this series is planned for release in the near future. This volume will cover financial management, security and information management, and provide additional coverage of the history of the movement in modern-day times. This third volume will focus more thoroughly on topics such as Charlottesville, Berkeley, and other major protests of the Trump-era of the Black Bloc.

## **FTAA Protests: Miami, November 2003**

Yet another 1990s/2000s-era meeting of oligarchs and corporatists, involved with theft of jobs from working-class Americans and shipping them to other nations, after confiscating land from the foreign peoples, making them worse off for the most part. Everyone loses – except for management. The Free Trade Areas of the Americas (FTAA). FTAA is similar to NATFA, except seeks to include 34 countries from the Americas – Cuba excluded, of course. The protests lasted from November 17<sup>th</sup> through 21<sup>st</sup>.

For readers of the first volume of this series, the name “John Timoney” should sound familiar. If not, please refer to the 2000 RNC (Philadelphia) section of volume one for a further discussion. For those without a copy of Volume One, I shall provide a brief introduction: John Timoney was the law enforcement official involved in planning and oversight of security for the 2000 RNC in Philadelphia – an event which resulted in lawsuits for police brutality and numerous arrests of protesters. Miami’s new police chief at the time of the FTAA protests was none other than John Timoney, so the discussion below is what one would expect: numerous cases of police brutality, unlawful arrests of protesters, and subsequent lawsuits.

Given the onset of the Iraq War, the federal government increased focus on “national security”. By “national security” in this context, it should be operationally-defined as the end result of quashing the opposition who seeks to invoke their first amendment rights<sup>1</sup>. Police Chief Timoney prepared for protests by enlisting over nine-thousand militarized officers – complete with armored vehicles, roof-top snipers, firearms, water cannons, pepper spray, tasers, canines, etc.

This militarized force – a force which demonstrates why separation of civilian law enforcement and the military is necessary for police-citizen relations – patrolled the streets in well-organized phalanxes ranging from a few dozen to over 100 officers. Almost ten million dollars in federal funds were utilized for artillery for this event. Numerous attendees reported being arrested or detained without charge, being tortured during interrogation, and many hundreds of attendees were violently assaulted. Individuals connected to the Anarchist People of

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1 Note: At this point in Antifa’s history, many of the members were revolutionary socialists and anarchists. The Constitution, including the first amendment, are irrelevant to their ideological framework.

Color (APOC) reported being separated from other inmates and beaten for hours by guards with night sticks, fists, and other weapons.

Given Timoney's experience planning for the 2000 RNC, he knew to begin early with a fierce presence. The Bloc which attended the rally numbered approximately 200 and was quickly surrounded near a gathering place for a union-workers march, which was expected to begin on the 18<sup>th</sup> at 11 am. This tactic was utilized by the police to minimize the impact of union protesters, and roadblocks and other tactics were utilized to prevent entry of additional union protesters. This resulted in physical confrontations between the police and protesters, including one woman who had her ear blown off by a fired projectile from the police. Hundreds were jailed. A total of 20-30 thousand protesters attended the event.

Despite being unable to blockade the event, a few positives should be noted:

1. The FTAA meeting ended one day early.
2. Major decisions were delayed until 2010.

It is uncertain to what degree mass protesting affected these outcomes, though.

## **Bush Protest: Pittsburgh 2004**

The World Trade Center attack on September 11<sup>th</sup> acted as a catalyst for new legislation, including the PATROIT Act. Despite claiming a loss of liberty was necessary to alleviate the nation of potential threats, the loss of liberty seemingly had no positive impact, at least not with respect to increasing terrorist arrests or decreasing the number of attacks. However, President George W. Bush Administration-era policies impeded peaceful protesters from gathering, and numerous individuals were detained and even tortured for the mere crime of civic engagement and exposing corruption and abuse. Bush is seemingly universally-hated by the “left” and “right”; however, at the time, he received significant support from neo-conservatives, neo-liberals, and certain religious sects.

President Bush was deemed a war criminal deserving of impeachment and removal from office, according to a significant plethora of the left – ranging from your run-of-the-mill Democrats and social progressives to the greens. The Black Bloc protested Bush too, albeit most were anarchists or libertarian socialists, and would have protested even if Gore were to have been elected. Given the hawkish tendency of the Clinton administration under which Al Gore served as Vice President, the reasons for protesting (war, globalism) would have likely remained the same, regardless of whether it was Bush or Gore elected.

A variety of individuals and groups participated in this event. The Pittsburgh Organizing Group called for a Black Bloc and others to attend, infuriated by the oncoming financial collapse, lack of stable jobs, an expensive war in Iraq, and the deaths of Americans overseas. The protest, at least from the perspective of the Black Bloc and close allies, was an anti-capitalist, anti-imperialist protest.

This event, in and of itself, is seemingly unimportant. Less than one thousand protesters gathered outside of the convention center at 10<sup>th</sup> street and Penn while inside, President George W. Bush, Arlen Specter, and other influential, wealthy individuals gathered for a fundraiser for the Republican Party. Six protesters were arrested and the barricade was never breached. However, it should be noted that this was an early onset of a notable shift in the “left-wing” protest movement, one that is more readily apparent in the modern-day American Antifa movement: the younger generation was beginning to abandon nonviolent humanism for militant radicalism. This was noted by many Black Bloc anarchists, including Van Deusen & Massot (2010). The Pittsburgh Organizing Group stated, “This is in fact our first ever call for a Black Bloc at an

event.. our responsibility to resist, for WE ARE complicit in these atrocities.<sup>1</sup>”

## Pro-Choice March: April 2004, DC

United by a shared disgust of President George W. Bush, the Antifa Black Bloc began uniting with third-wave feminists, Antiras, and others under the “far left” umbrella. This was displayed during the Pro-choice march in Washington, D.C. on April 25, 2004. This weekend’s events also included the annual IMF/World Bank meetings, which seemingly were delegated to secondary importance to fear of safe access to abortion services being eliminated. The majority of funding for this march was from Planned Parenthood.

A coalition named Radical Cheerleaders of D.C. converged on D.C. for the pro-choice rally, expressing fear of Roe v. Wade being overturned as evidenced by a recent late term abortion ban. As stated by a representative of the group, “The late term abortion ban which was recently signed into law is the biggest blow to reproductive autonomy that many of us have experienced in our lifetimes.”<sup>2</sup>

The Radical Cheerleaders of D.C. and related groups entered the march well-rehearsed with chants and in tactics, given a meeting at the National Conference on Organized Resistance (NCOR) took place in January. Violence and property destruction was discouraged, but not prohibited, as evidenced by the following quote from Van Deusen & Massot (2010):

*“If you or your group has a strong affinity for property destruction and/or confrontation, we suggest channeling your efforts in creative ways. For example, we can guarantee that there will be anti-choice counter-protesters present throughout the city. Though angrily confronting such people is useless because they are irrational and will not listen to you, their demonstrations often rely heavily on visuals. These visuals are often put on the sides of mobile vehicles or set up behind a very small fence. Either way a thick layer of paint could really compliment a bloody fetus picture.”<sup>3</sup>*

As evidenced by the above quotation and other materials from this protest, significant hostility, and a willingness to engage in at least a slight degree of violence and property destruction, was present on the pro-choice side.

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1 Van Deusen & Massot, 2010.

2 I.b.i.d.

3 I.b.i.d.

The Antifas joined the march to provide protection and marched in solidarity with fellow comrades. A significant overlap existed between the radical elements of the pro-choice movement and Antifa. Radical elements in the march stated the mainstream demonstrators supported their presence. However, discussions with mainstream demonstrators found rather conflicting feelings, ranging from emphatic praise to derisive condemnation.

Finally, it is important to note the trend towards grouping the “right-wing” into a similar enemy schema, including the likes of World Church of the Creator and the Ku Klux Klan alongside Protestant proliferators, and at the time of writing, a loud minority, if not an actual numerical majority, also consider economic libertarians and limited-state constitutionalists as elements within the enemy class. This broadening of the enemy class creates enemies out of potential allies amongst the working-class union laborers.

## **Valley Forge Battle: September 2004**

On September 25<sup>th</sup>, 2004, during the time of the Jewish holiday Yom Kippur, approximately 100 members of the National Socialist Movement planned a gathering near Valley Forge. Intelligence-gathering by the anti-fascists proved successful, providing more than adequate time to prepare for a full-on assault of the reactionary movement.

Approximately 100 members of a variety of organizations, including Anti-Racist Action, Red and Anarchist Skin Heads (RASH), NEFAC, and others, united in solidarity to “stop the fascist creeps”. Battling antisemitism is historically-rooted in the Antifa history, with the Dreyfus Affair considered by many to be the most useful starting point for the tracing of American Antifa’s anti-fascist lineage. Given the ties of national socialism to antisemitism, and the National Socialist Movement’s reactionary ideals relating to the “Jewish Question” (JQ) and an opposition to the state of Israel at least partially rooted in a belief of racial superiority or, at minimum, a desire for racial separatism, the NSM was expecting opposition. However, the opposition that arrived was more aggressive than previously expected.

Approximately one hundred NSM members arrived to the gathering, creating relatively equal numbers for the NSM and its opposition. The New Black Panther Party attended as well, giving the advantage of numbers to the opposition side. Given the hilly geography of the area, the anti-fascist opposition was able to conduct unexpected ambushes on small groups attempting to attend the event. NSM members required hospitalization, and the event ended an hour early as a result of



the police refusing to provide further security due to repeated incidents of violence. All-in-all, one Antifa and three NSM members were arrested.

## J20, 2005:

The #J20 protest of the Trump inauguration was defined by many conservative and alternative media outlets as being a unique effort by Democrats, the Deep State, and a swath of other anti-Trumpers to unseat a duly-elected president. Even the mainstream media, including CNN, MSNBC, and The Young Turks, presented the J20 protest as being inextricably linked to Trump resistance. This is a fallacious presentation, given “J20” by name has occurred during each of the presidential inaugurations since 2005, and similar protests involving the Black Bloc’s presence can be traced back to 1997, if not even earlier. J20 was one of note for the history of the Antifa movement.

J20 of 2005 involved over ten thousand demonstrators, largely organized by the D.C. Anti-War Network (D.A.W.N.). Dozens of other American cities held similar protest. Despite ideological alignment in enemy identification, the larger protest movement failed to adequately capture strength-by-numbers as a result of specific ideological and strategic differences. As stated in Van Deusen & Massot (2005):

*“The pigs would be ready. Would the Black Bloc? Many signs were present that would imply otherwise. The mobilization was marred with indecision and lack of structure from the start. The first call to action was made available to select groups then rescinded. Then another call came from NYC. Then another from ARA which seemed to compete with the first. Some influential anarchists were calling for smaller decentralized actions instead of a Bloc. One contingent absurdly argued that the Bloc should refocus its energies on a pro-choice action later in the week.”*<sup>1</sup>

This is a long-standing tradition in the sphere of radical politics, dating back to the French Revolution, American populist and labor movements of the mid-to-late nineteenth century, and beyond. Competing factions on the fringes typically results in a relatively more balanced center-left eventually assuming power, at least when dealing with radical movements with significant popular support. However, prior to critiquing the protest’s failures in further detail, we will provide a brief overview of various tactics utilized during the protest.

With the plethora of groups and individuals participating in J20:2005, discussing the strategies and tactics of each would require a full-length text on the subject. The focus will be reined in to specific

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<sup>1</sup> p. 266.

documented plans relating to groups allied with, or predecessors to, modern-day Antifa groups. The general goal of the militant groups was rather obvious: to break through the security perimeter and to either disrupt or prevent the parade from occurring altogether. The federal, state, and local law enforcement and intelligence agencies planned for this, heightening security compared to previous presidential inaugurations. Competing with the endless resources of government agencies proved to be a daunting task, requiring creative use of resources and planning.

Intelligence gathering and security continue to be important aspects of many black blocs. Counter-intelligence by Antifas is necessary for outing individuals and groups. It is also necessary for discovering semi-private and undisclosed secretive meetings of oppositional groups. Prior to the event, counter-intelligence affinity groups gathered information about the parade route and street layout. During the morning of the event, specific weaknesses in the security perimeter were identified. These specific areas were identified and monitored, with information relayed via two-way radio and other channels to the Black Bloc. The Black Bloc was able to break through the first line of the police barricade with relative ease, but instead of exploiting their brief advantage, the Bloc and allied protesters became increasingly disorganized, moving in directions counter to allied intelligence scouts. The riot police redeployed, regaining control over the security breach for the remainder of the afternoon.

As the initial breach of security was rectified by the riot police, an increasing swell of sympathetic parties joined the Bloc. The boots-on-the-ground report of the total number of protesters in this crowd was 700, with Pacifica Radio reporting 1,500, and other eyewitness accounts reporting over 2,000 in the Bloc and temporary allies crowd<sup>1</sup>. Attempting to take advantage of this increase in numbers, a second attempt at charging a weak point in the barrier ensued. However, the riot police responded by brutally assaulting protesters with large metal whips, resembling “elongated antennas”.<sup>2</sup>

At 4:00pm, a “Mass Re-meet” assembled at Dupont Circle, with food and beverages for participants. A march to downtown Washington D.C. occurred, with a respectably-sized Black Bloc amassing both in the circle, and amongst those who were able to march towards the downtown area before a barricade of police on motorcycles encircled the gathering, preventing the protesters from leaving the area.

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1 Van Deusen & Massot, 2010, p. 266.

2 I.b.i.d.

After 10pm, the Black Bloc and other protesters reconvened outside of the Constitutional Ball at the Hilton hotel on Connecticut Avenue. On the way to this event, bank windows were smashed, a police substation and police cars vandalized, and other acts of anti-capitalist, anti-police militancy ensued, resulting in the arrest of 78 people and approximately \$20,000 in damages.

All-in-all, the protesters demonstrated that a significant percentage of the population vehemently opposed the war and the politicians in favor of it, yet no significant deviation from policy occurred after the protests. Eventually, it led to a rejection of the Republican Party in the 2008 presidential election, resulting in the election of President Barack Obama, who despite campaigning on a “Bring the Troops Home” platform, continued the imperialistic war policies of the Bush administration. Instead of recognizing the lack of true differentiation between the DNC and RNC, many mainstream progressives and Democratic Party supporters continued support for Obama, creating further separation between the anti-capitalist, anti-imperialist militant left and the Democratic Party left. It was not until the campaign of Donald Trump that the mainstream left reaffirmed support for the militant left, albeit for issues of perceived discrimination instead of principled opposition to capitalism, materialism, and statism.

This section will conclude with the words of Mobtown Anti-Racist Action, which captures the beliefs of the militant left protesters quite adequately, by equating neo-conservative policy to fascism:

*“Blinded by militaristic nationalism and sedated by the opiate of religious fundamentalism, the people of this country have allowed the fascist ideology of neo-conservatism and their culture of fear to seize the day. We see the success of the right wing’s “cultural war” in the powerlessness of the liberal left. After running a failed campaign whose only selling points were the attempt to present themselves as more militaristic and better able to use white supremacist code words than the Republicans, the Kerry camp pathetically folded their tails between their legs and quit. And after the elections, the only analysis Democratic Party strategists could make is that they needed to add more religion to their platform.*

*The liberals can’t fight this battle, and without winning this battle they will keep losing all their other programs. And while we have no desire or intention of being shock troops for the liberals, we as anarchists need to step up for the sake of our culture and our future. While we were fighting the neo-liberal trade agreements, the religious right was building a power base strong enough to just sweep them aside. While we were fighting rear-guard battles to crush petty fascist threats, a larger and more sophisticated fascist movement was coalescing in front of us.”<sup>1</sup>*

## Rose City Antifa (Portland Area), Summer 2009

During the summer of 2009, a Portland-area Antifa group – Rose City Antifa – engaged in a plethora of tactics with the goal being to prevent controversial speakers and organizations from organizing events in their area. “We believe that those pushing organized Jew-hatred and pogrom policies should be collectively resisted. No compromises and no half measures.”<sup>1</sup> The various competing anti-fascist groups of Portland grew in prominence as a reaction to the creation of Volksfront in 1994, a skinhead white supremacist group.

Tim Titrud, a self-employed landscaper, received a letter in the mail with a color photo of Hitler with a caption, “Thinking of You”, on the front. On the back, “Destroy yourself” was spelled out in Germanic runes. Titrud had recently tried to organize an event with a speaker who was labeled anti-Semitic by Rose City Antifa. The speaker, Valdas Anelauskas, is a Soviet-born scholar who was supposed to speak on June 10<sup>th</sup>, 2009, at Laughing Horse Books. After the cancellation of the event, at least three members left the collective, and other groups, including a 9/11 Truth group, changed their meeting location to elsewhere. His talk, eventually talking place at the Old Wives’ Tales restaurant, was on the topic of the Frankfurt school.

Tim Calvert, a longtime anti-war activist, was called to be fired from his position on the board of CityBikes Workers Cooperative, as a result of opposition to the actions of the state of Israel. This was just one sign of many, demonstrating the divisions within the left-wing activist community in Portland.

Grace Grant, a member of Laughing Horse Book Collective, opposes the aggressive tactics of the Antifas, stating, “They’re worse than the early colonists with the heretics, where you were removed out into the wilderness to die... I don’t want to be a part of that kind of community. It’s pretty heartless. I don’t know who’s setting these standards and norms.”<sup>2</sup> Chip Berlet and other notable progressive activists agree with the problematic aspects of utilizing violence to advance progressive ideals.

Stanislav Vysotsky, Willamette University sociology professor, disagrees with the above sentiment. Vysotsky believes in the utilization of “doxing” and similar tactics for advancing progressive causes and deincincentivizing unethical behavior. Vysotsky stated, "The strategy is to

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<sup>1</sup> Van Deusen, 2010, p. 269.

<sup>1</sup> Pitkin, 2009.

<sup>2</sup> I.b.i.d.

shut them down. Someone can't be active if they are out looking for a job, and homes are their base of operation. If you put yourself in the shoes of a movement member, there is very much a logic to this."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Pitkin, 2009.

## Boston Free Speech Rally: Ryan Scott's Attack on Tim Pool

Tim Pool, an independent journalist, was assaulted at a Free Speech Rally in Boston on May 13th, 2017. The demonstration was organized to address the threat to freedom of speech, as evidenced by cases of individuals being de-platformed, assaulted, removed from social media platforms, and other actions which are counter to freedom of speech. The organizers and supporters were maligned by Antifa and other groups as being a fascist-led, fascist-supported event.



Tim Pool was assaulted by Ryan Scott, a white Muslim convert who was identified within 10 hours by users on 4chan. According to Brian Bojan Dordevic, “He assaulted [sic] him by smacking his hand holding the phone, getting into his face, blocking him from filming and verbally threatening him.”<sup>1</sup> Other Antifa members threw urine, waved U.S.S.R. flags, and physically assaulted many attendees. According to one member – user “FUNGALMONOLITH” on Twitter – “I love the smell of terrified college republicans. It smells like.. victory.”<sup>2</sup>

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1 Lane, 2017.

2 Laila, 2017.

## Eric Clanton

*“We who know Eric, love Eric: a challenging and fiery political discussion partner, an unrelenting yet humble caregiver, and most of all, a devoted friend. Eric has always amplified the voices of those fighting for total liberation.”<sup>1</sup>*

On April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2017, Eric Clanton, a former instructor at Diablo Valley College, attended a Free Speech Rally in Berkley, CA, as a counter-protester. Armed with a bike lock, carefully concealed within a sock at times, allegedly attacked four demonstrators. 4Chan users tracked him down, measuring facial features, determining height based on a Starbucks cup he was holding, and researching his social media profile. The evidence was turned over to the Berkley Police Department and was subsequently arrested in late May. Four victims have come forward, claiming to have been struck in the head or neck with a U-shaped bike lock.

It's Going Down, a website associated with the modern Antifa movement, called Clanton's case a kangaroo court, outing numerous attendees as being “alt-right” and “racist” and listing criminal cases of many attendees. According to Clanton:

*“Dealing with an unintelligible Internet force smearing and threatening me online was not easy and created stress to say the least, but I had every expectation that very few people would take them seriously, especially considering the character and credibility of their sources.”<sup>2</sup>*

He also stated:

*“My case threatens to set a new standard in which right wing extremists can select targets for repression and have police enthusiastically and forcefully pursue them... All of this moves in a strategy to further chill dissent, and to clamp down on resistance to the dangerous and aggressive growth of the exact kind of white supremacist violence that we saw this last weekend.”<sup>1</sup>*

Taking the position of martyr has gained some support amongst the Antifa movement, with websites such as Its Going Down providing favorable coverage of his case, smearing participants on the “free speech” side of the rally as being criminals and racists. The violence is not denied; it is presented as self-defense:

*“The rhetoric that Chapman and others repeat at these so-called free speech rallies has deadly consequences.. Most of these people (if not all of them) have been trying again and again to take their fascist agenda to the streets of the Bay Area.”<sup>2</sup>*

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1 From supporterericclanton.com.

2 Orenstein, 2017.

1 I.b.i.d.

2 NoCARA, 2017.







Many individuals from both sides of this rally attended expecting, if not actually seeking, violent confrontations. Many attended this rally believing the other side to be oppressing their lifestyles and political ideologies. The end result was as to be expected: numerous people injured on both sides, and further division within the nation.

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## Chapter VI: Conclusion

When I started this book series, I believed it would be an expose on the Antifa movement. I would demonstrate how the movement is driven by dangerous ideologies and why it should be opposed. However, what I discovered was much more complex. Many of the Antifas I spoke to hold similar values and principles as myself, believing strongly in the non-aggression principle and self-ownership. Perhaps some of us disagree on the details, but we agree on the broad, underlying principles.

My goal to educate the public on the Antifa movement turned into the Antifa movement and its opposition educating me. By no means is this book series perfect. I am on a very small budget and only have sparse use of the services of an editor: my sister-in-law who studied English at university. The Antifa movement, and the numerous “far left” movements frequently tossed into the same general category as Antifa, are full of diversity: not only superficial diversity of appearance, but also diversity of ideas. Disagreements and infighting is common. Similar to classifying all Muslims as dangerous, classifying all Antifas as violent or dangerous is equally insufficient.

I would like to thank everyone within the Antifa movement who assisted me in research and willingly engaged in arguments – arguments that occasionally became rather heated – for the purpose of advancing society. Whether “far right”, “far left”, “libertarian”, or whatever – all of us generally agree that society is moving in a potentially dangerous direction and that we can all do better. While a white supremacist and an anti-racist will not likely unite for any purpose, perhaps many of the rest of us can set aside petty differences and advance society on the basis of two principles: self-ownership and the non-aggression principle.

Also, a third volume is in the works, which will fill in many of the gaps left in the historical discussion. This work will focus on technical details of group operations, including recruitment strategies, information management and security, and financial management. This book will also have the general purpose of instructing the public on how to create a group to advance a social or political goal.

Thank you everyone for your support! I dream of the day where people of all expressions fully own themselves and engage in voluntary interactions with others. Voluntarism, not federalism, should be the rallying cry for the people of the world!